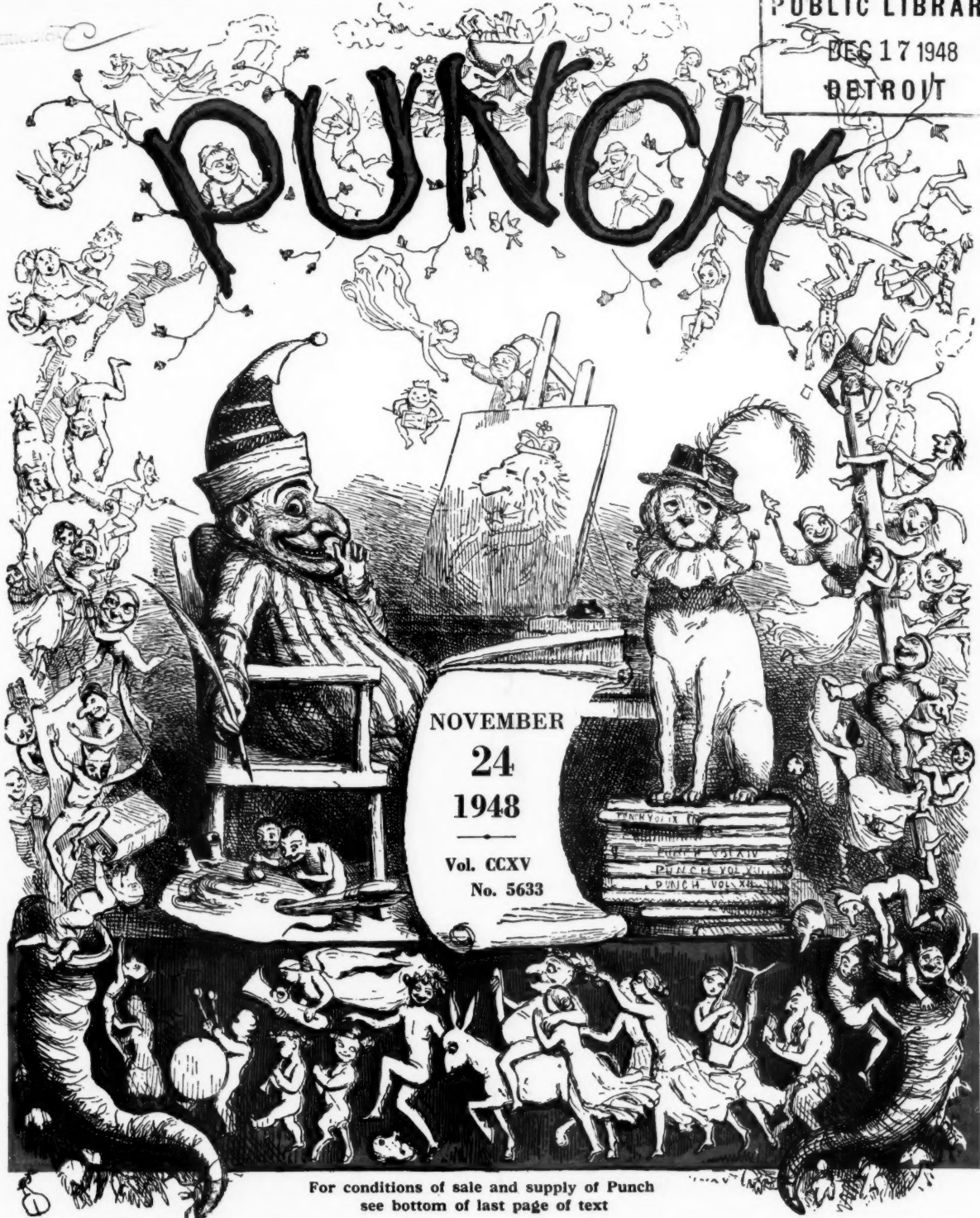


Huntley & Palmers *the first name you think of in* Biscuits

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HERE, THERE and EVERYWHERE . . . *Player's please*



[NCC 641X]

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P.705A

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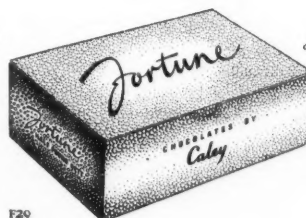
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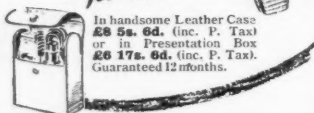
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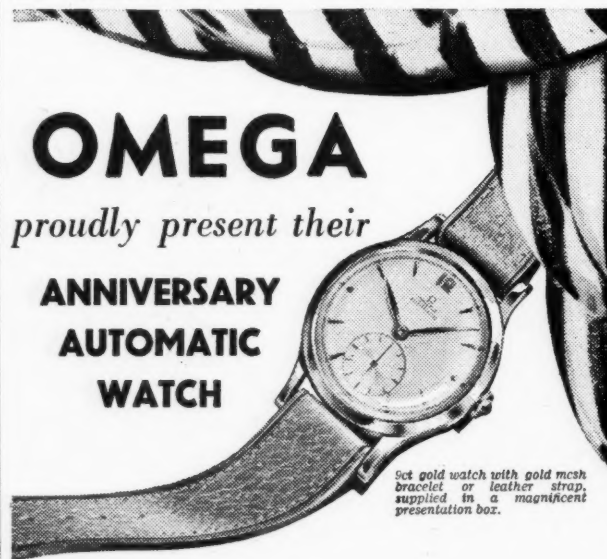
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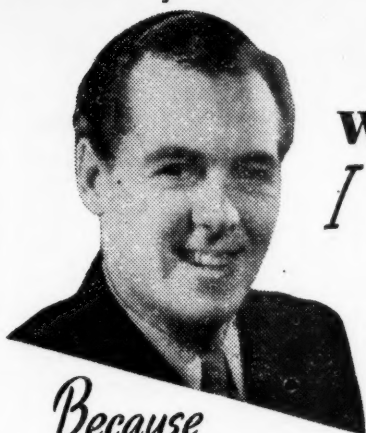
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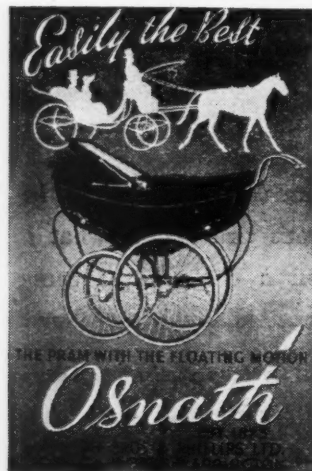
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Why cannot we have more?

Because we have not enough pigs here, either for Wiltshire Sausage or Wiltshire Bacon. Are they not worth pleading for, these simple luxuries? Press, then, your friends and those in authority for more home-bred pigs—you will get them if you try hard enough.

HARRIS

FAVORITE FOR BACON SINCE 1770

Punch, November 24 1948

See what I've got!



Orchids? It's rare and precious Nescafé she's pleased about. Nescafé gives you a grand cup of coffee in an instant. Just put a spoonful in the cup, then add near-boiling water; no grounds, no bother. And it's always good, for that roaster-fresh aroma is sealed in until you add water.

NESCAFÉ



Nescafé is a soluble coffee product composed of coffee solids, with dextrins, maltose and dextrose, added to retain the aroma.

A Nestlé's Product

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This Winter the French Riviera will spring to brilliant life again with a season reminiscent of those which made it famous—fêtes and galas—battles of flowers—musical, sporting, fashionable events of every kind—and, of course, sunshine—in surroundings of perfect natural beauty.

The French Riviera

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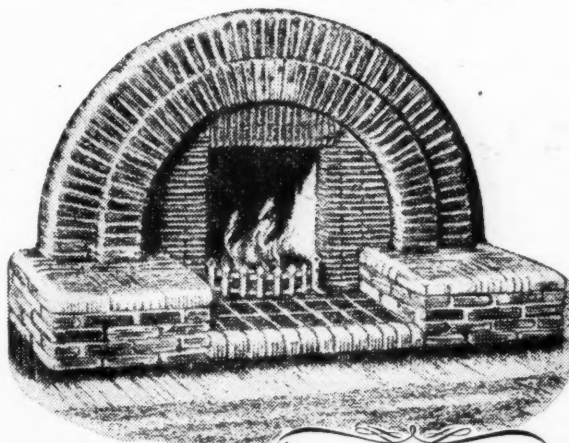
Health and pleasure come together when you gargle with fragrant 'Dettol'. You exchange that touch of morning catarrh for fresh, cool comfort. You start the day with a clear throat, and a mouth refreshed and clean. You take a pleasant anti-septic precaution and you feel better for it.

The morning gargle is a pleasure with

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The fable of the sage and his critics

A certain Philosopher, who had fallen upon troublesome times, was taken to task by some of those around him. 'Most Ancient,' they said, 'your constitution is enfeebled. You have surely had your day. How much longer do you propose to live, O Obstinate?'

'Your grandfathers,' replied the Sage, 'often used to ask me the same thing. And in course of time I have no doubt I shall discuss the matter with your grandchildren.'

Things go hard for Britain now, as for many other countries. But Britain has a stubborn vitality, a quality as difficult to define as it is to destroy. If we are true to our character, we shall find that we are young enough and strong enough to outlast this emergency, and many another yet unknown. That is the belief behind all T.I.'s plans for the future.



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I know, I'll give him a Gillette razor set!

How his eyes will light up when I present him with it on Christmas morning! He probably hasn't had a new Gillette Razor Set for years, and his old one is a veteran now. How he'll thank me for those mornings and mornings of smoother, quicker shaving! There are Gillette Razor Sets in a variety of attractive modern cases. Sets from 3/1 to 30/- including Purchase Tax.

No. 15 Set (illustrated). Aristocrat one-piece razor in nickel-plated case with hinged blade sheath containing 10 Blue Gillette Blades. 28/9 inc. P. Tax.
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Good mornings begin with Gillette



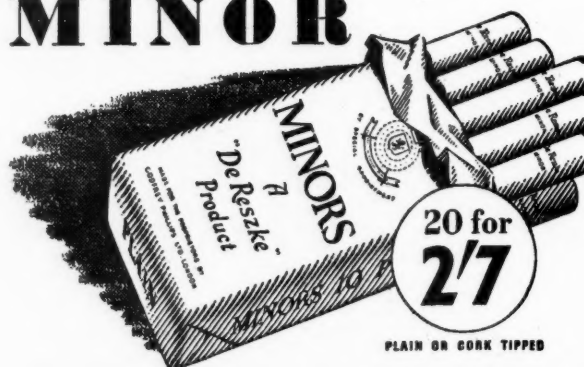
Can I smoke less tobacco?

And still enjoy 20 a day?

20 good cigarettes?

Yes! mine's a

MINOR



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Harvey's world-famous Wines packed in Cases and delivered to your friends before Christmas, provided that orders are received not later than December 10th. Here are two examples.

CASE "A"

1 bottle Golden Sherry - - - 20/-
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Total price (including carriage and packing) - - - - - 40/-

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1 bottle "Merienda" Sherry - 20/-
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We shall be happy to send you the full list of all our SPECIAL * CHRISTMAS CASES, ranging in price from 40/- to 112/-, on * receipt of a postcard with your name and address.

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JOHN HARVEY & SONS LTD

5 Pipe Lane, Colston St., Bristol, 1 London Office: 40 King St., St. James's, S.W.1



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXV No. 5633

November 24 1948

Charivaria

"THERE is an apparent flattening of the curve of production," says Sir Stafford Cripps. That's what comes of our having got round the corner so often.

Pharmacists have asked the B.B.C., when giving "dangerous drug" warnings, to omit the name of the drug. We know it now, anyway.



People are warned to beware of counterfeit five-pound notes this Christmas. The public remains calm but grateful for the compliment.

According to a trade journal there has been no real change in men's suits for twenty years. This applies particularly to the pockets.

Weeping and Whaling

"Sheffield Wednesday half-back Whitcomb, must be whaling. 'Why does it always happen to me?'" — *Barnsley Chronicle*.

A Shrewsbury woman has a collection of over a hundred sunshades. It seems she has been saving up for a fine day.

In the opinion of a London magistrate, writing on a wall is a most objectionable and mischievous crime. Edmonton electors don't care.

A seventeen-stone baker in the Midlands says he eats a dozen new rolls every day — four for breakfast, four at midday and five for supper.

A Viennese barber, in a contest, has broken world records by shaving a man in 14.5 seconds. In the face of stubble resistance.



A Londoner who has been visiting New York describes America as the land where counters are under the cigarettes.

Some people seem incapable of expressing in words their appreciation of a gift, complains a correspondent. It must just be taken for granted.

"The managements will remain, at least in principle." *Leader on the Steel Bill in Yorkshire paper.* But go west in practice?

A busy doctor says he has found that much time can be saved by a notice prominently displayed in the waiting-room: "Have Your Symptoms Ready."



A Brooklyn man has a Siamese hen which lays two eggs at a time. If he can breed others from it he proposes to call them the Two-Clucks Clan.

A correspondent says he was slapped violently on the back by a complete stranger who added insult to injury by explaining that it was a case of mistaken nonentity.

A stage magician recently married his assistant. He is said to have fallen in love with her the first moment he saw her.

"It must be five years or more since listeners first met Mrs. Mulligan—the creation of Ireland's top-ranking comedian, Jimmy O'Dea (pronounced, by the way, as spelt)." *"Radio Times."* O'Yea?

The recent activity by Scotland Yard detectives is said to be making dealing in the black market so dangerous that spivs venture out now only in pairs.

In 1841

A ROYAL Baby arrived at Buckingham Palace during the November of the first year of *Punch*. The paper, which was far from respectful and mainly consisted of puns, had demanded a boy. "The Post Office in Downing Street has been besieged by various enquirers who are anxiously seeking for some information as to the expected arrival of the Royal Male."

But twins were regarded as a possibility according to Mr. Punch, on the grounds that this would enable a baronetcy to be conferred on the Lord Mayor of London and on the Lord Mayor of Dublin as well. When the baby arrived alone, the paper said: "Our suggestion made last week that the Royal birth should take place on Lord Mayor's Day, has, we are happy to see, been partially attended to."

The boy was the great-great-grandfather of the boy we salute to-day—but without attempting the facetiousness of a hundred and seven years ago. He was born in harder times than these. There was famine in the land. The Corn Law agitation was at its height, the principal pre-occupation of *Punch* was baiting Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert, I think, might well have challenged the editor to a duel, as he had once challenged Daniel O'Connell, and many years later was to challenge Disraeli. The first editor of *Punch* was a very fat man. He would have made a splendid mark.

It was difficult for the paper to pause in its radical campaign, even to hymn the arrival of a Prince of Wales. However, it tried hard.

*Huzza! We've a little Prince at last,
A roaring Royal boy
And all day long the booming bells
Have rung their peels of joy:
And the little park guns have blazed away
And made a tremendous noise
While the air has been filled since eleven o'clock
With the shouts of little boys,
And we have taken our little bell
And rattled and laughed and sung as well
Roo-too-tooit Shallabella
Life to the Prince! Fallaladaralla.*

The rather eccentric refrain must be attributed to the fact that *Punch* had not yet acquired its present cover, but was represented on the outer sheet by a puppet show-man with pipe and drum.

Even in this mood of exultation he could not wholly keep away from the urgent question of the hour, and the verses end:

*Our little Prince, when he grows a boy,
Will be taught by men of lore
From the dusty Tome of the ancient Sage
As kings have been taught before:
But will there be one good true man then
To tutor the infant heart
To tell him the world was made for all
And the poor man claims his part?
We trust there will so we rattle our bell
And shout and laugh and sing as well
Roo-too-tooit Shallabella
Life to the Prince! Fallaladaralla.*

After that back to Peel. In a spirit of ferocious sarcasm, "We owe the Prince of Wales entirely to the present Cabinet. Had the Whigs remained in office, the infant would probably have been a girl."

And then, rather more directly,

"The Prince has passed a comfortable night and is much easier."

"The Prince is fast asleep and is more quiet."

"The Prince has been shown to Sir Robert Peel and was very fretful."

"Sir Robert Peel has left the Palace and the Prince is again completely composed."

A few, but very few, references to the happy event succeeded in avoiding politics.

"The Prince of Wales is by birth at the head of all the Infantry in the Kingdom, and is Colonel in his own right of a Regiment of Soldiers."

"H.R.H. will for the present go by the title of Poppet, affectionately conferred by Mrs. Lilly at the moment of his birth. Lovey Dovey has been spoken of, but it is not likely that His Royal Highness will assume the style and dignity of Lovey Dovey for a considerable period."

"His Royal Highness has not yet been created a Knight of the Garter, though Sir James Clarke insisted on his being admitted to the Bath."

"Why is the little P.O.W. like the 11th Hussars? Because it is Prince Albert's own."

There are also several allusions to H.R.H.'s wardrobe.

Sir Robert Peel went on, undeterred by the continuous bombardment of puns and pasquinades, to emancipate the Roman Catholics, to reorganize the Police Force, to impose a monstrous Income Tax of 7d. in the £, and to repeal the Corn Laws; but the child born in his first Premiership saw vaster changes than these. May it be a good omen that coming at one of the darkest hours in the history of Britain he lived to see us at the zenith of our prosperity and to be known as the Peacemaker. EVOE.

Ebb-Tide

THE grass-green water gleams like glass
And curls across the winter sand;
Feather-to-foam the white gulls pass
Tide-tossed towards the leafless land.

Here the bright children run and leap
Lighter than larks, and sing for joy;
The seaweed harvest theirs to keep,
Each carved and whorled shell their toy.

Enchanted by the fitful sun
And heaven-high pinnacles of cloud,
On feet as free as air they run
Before the wind, and laugh aloud.

They have flung off all yesterdays;
Time is stood still for them; they hold
It captive in their candid gaze;
And as a new tale to be told.

They look wide-eyed upon to-morrow
These are our high hope to the last—
The fair future, for which we borrow
A little faith to keep steadfast.

The grass-green water frets the shore
And ripples run across the sand . . .
The children, with their flotsam store
Run laughing to the waiting land. M. E. R.



THE VERY IMPORTANT PERSON



"... it will be four eleven and twenty seconds, pip, pip, pip, at the third stroke it will be four eleven and thirty seconds, pip, pip, pip—Oh dear, I wish they'd get Tim repaired."

One Word

"ABSURD," was all I said. A thing like that makes me feel rabid, but it is best to treat it with contempt and only say just one word, like that. It is no good to refute nonsense of that kind, because they know it isn't true, and only hope to get more out of you if you take the matter up and argue about it, so I let her see she was banging at a closed door. I did add that it was an extraordinary thing to say, because of course it was, and she had no business to jump to conclusions—nor she had, and I let her know it.

And, if you please, what do you think she said? She had the impertinence to say she knew more than I thought.

"Indeed," was all I said, pretty coldly, as you may imagine, but I added, "Anyone could say that."

"Some do, let me tell you," she replied, "I am not the only one," and then went on with all the rubbish she pretended to know.

"Inventions," I said in disgust, when I could get a word in—"Inventions."

I thought it best to dismiss the subject with that, and let her see I could put my foot down. Of course it was outrageous, but she knows now what I think, for she made me furious, and I wasn't going to sit down under a thing like that, so I let her know it pretty straight.

I said, "I was not born in 1893, it was a misprint or a mistake if they saw that at Somerset House or anywhere else, and if Elsie said Queen Victoria, you can't go by her, she might have said Queen Anne, and if I was and she did it wouldn't make

any difference, because I didn't know who the letter was from, as I returned it unopened because it was impertinent, and mind you, it was a great piece of presumption to try to involve me in that affair which I had never heard of and was thoroughly sick of already. The whole thing was preposterous, and now you come to me with a cock-and-bull story, and I am to discuss it with you. Is it likely!"

I am sure it is best to keep aloof, and defeat that kind of thing by complete indifference, by appearing to know nothing and by saying nothing; and I am glad now that I did.

Hard Going

"Oxfordshire's second season in the County Rugby Championship opened on the Pressed Steel ground, Cowley, this afternoon."—"Oxford Mail."

Our Duty is Clear.

SEARCHING feverishly through my newspaper for something about something else (if I make myself clear), I find the following:

"Six almond-eyed, soft-voiced Tibetans, led by Tsepon Shakabpa, have arrived in Paris on their way to England to offer for sale the scent of musk, the wool of yaks, and furs of the snow leopard and golden bear."

Good. We are always glad to see almond-eyed Tibetans over here; we see far too little of them in the ordinary way. I say this in a spirit of pure friendliness, not as the suspiciously-minded may suggest with any idea of doing a deal with them personally. I do not wish to buy the scent of musk, having no immediate requirement for same. I should not know what to do with it if I had it. Nor am I interested in the wool of yaks, or, at any rate, I am interested only in the most general way. It is not the kind of stuff, to my mind, that one wants to have in the house in its unmanufactured state. The fur of a golden bear, now, I *would* like, but I know very well I shouldn't be able to afford it. You have only to take a look at me to see that I am not the kind of man to buy a golden bear, even on the H.P. system.

Welcome, then, without *arrière pensée*, to the six soft-voiced salesmen from Shangri-La.

What do they come to seek in return for their precious wares? Not pound notes, surely, which could be of little use to a man in those far-off fastnesses? Cotton, then, or pressed cheeses or motor-cars or the wool of sheep and rabbits? Fortunately the answer is given, in part at least, in the news item from which I have already taken the liberty of quoting. "We have heard" (says Shakabpa, who is Finance Minister) "that in England it is possible to buy mowing-machines that can be drawn by horses. They would be good to have in Tibet."

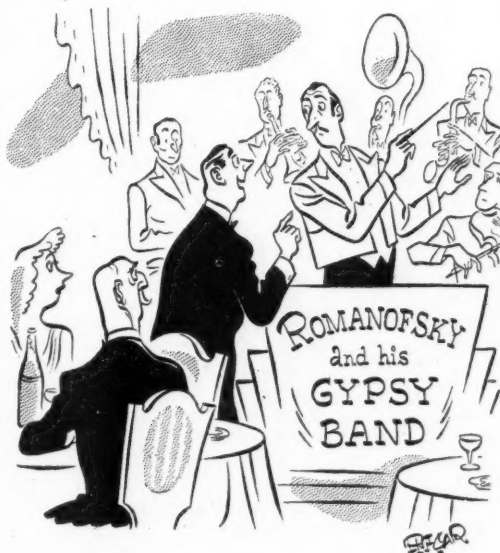
How this news first reached the ears of the central authority at Lhasa I am at a loss to guess. Sir Francis Younghusband, who was over there with a mission in 1904, may have mentioned the existence of these ingenious contrivances to the Dalai Lama, who fled, taking the secret with him; or the first hint of what was going on in distant England may have leaked out even earlier, for Mrs. Bishop, I see from my bibliography, was *Among the Tibetans* as far back as 1894, and there is no reason to doubt that she had ample opportunities of seeing horse-drawn mowing-machines in action before leaving these shores. The difficulty here of course is to account for the long delay between the arrival of the news and the dispatch of the present mission; and for this reason I am inclined to think that Tibet remained in ignorance of the new invention for many years more, perhaps until some exhausted traveller, his mind still dizzy with the marvels he had seen at the Great Durbar of 1911, came staggering over the Himalayas into East Nari. It is easy to picture the scene. The wondering groups of villagers pausing scythe in hand to listen to the scarce credible tales of the stranger, their almond eyes fixed in astonishment on his puny calves (for the Tibetans, says my encyclopædia, are broad-shouldered and muscular, and present a striking contrast to the weak-calved Hindus), and their soft voices breaking in now and again to question the possibility of cutting grass by means of revolving cylinders of iron. To the south of them, as they nod and murmur together, tower the giant peaks of Kamet and Nanda Devi, their mighty shoulders beginning to redden (though this is beside the point) in the rays of the westering sun. From mouth to mouth, from hamlet to hamlet, the story is passed, now treasured in the breast of

some herdsman as he drives his yaks along the shores of Lake Manasarowar, now ferried to the very gates of Shigatze in the vessels of wood and hide so characteristic of the upper reaches of the Sanpo River. Progress is slow. In this strange country, I read, an arctic winter prevails from May to October, when owing to the dryness of the atmosphere the air loses its conductivity and "the inhabitants, dressed in sheepskins, give out long electric sparks on approaching conducting substances." We must suppose that during this trying time intercourse of any kind is at a standstill, so that for long months the news of the horse-drawn mower must necessarily have stagnated, till the warmer weather came again.

But in the course of years the tidings reached Lhasa. Strange whisperings disturbed the peace of the long galleries in the palace of Po-ta-la. The Dalai Lama himself lent an indulgent ear . . .

Somewhere about 1938, I fancy, the licence to import horse-drawn mowing machines was finally issued. Followed the nagging delays of war, the return of better days, the revival of the cherished project and at long last the departure of the mission, laden with yak's wool and smelling strongly of musk, on the tedious voyage down the mighty Brahmaputra.

It is an affecting story. The spirit of the New Age triumphs in the Forbidden Country, the blessings of civilization speed on their way to revitalize the drooping tableland, and soon—perhaps before another decade has passed—the whirr of mowing-machines and the steady clip-clop of horses' feet will be heard where only the swish of the scythe and the long-drawn cry of the snow leopard have for centuries past re-echoed from the guardian peaks. Whatever our own difficulties may be, we must not disappoint these kindly muscular people. If necessary we must be prepared to go short of horse-drawn mowing-machines ourselves, for, as Tsepon Shakabpa has finely said, "they will be good to have in Tibet." H. F. E.



"Could you just settle an argument as to how to cook a hedgehog?"

At the Pictures

The Small Voice—Rope—Cass Timberlane—An Act of Murder

IT'S a great delight to come on a British picture like *The Small Voice* (Director: FERGUS McDONELL), which, without any fuss at all, without lavishing money on production, with-

obviously exciting, without knowing why. In short, this is a good one; try not to miss it.



[The Small Voice]

ARMS AND THE SUB-MAN

Boke HAROLD KEEL
Jim DONALD GREEN
Frankie MICHAEL BALFOUR

out building on a celebrated title or story, with only one really well-known star, succeeds brilliantly in its aim and becomes something to be proud of as well as to enjoy—because of sheer cinematic ability and imagination. The main line of the narrative is simple: three escaped convicts hide in a lonely house, imprisoning and terrorizing the occupants, the end being precipitated by "the small voice" they cannot bear to hear—the crying of a dangerously ill child. There is the subsidiary problem of the householder and his wife (marriage about to break up in bitterness and bickering), and this is given a solution perhaps rather pat, rather contrived; but how admirably VALERIE HOBSON and JAMES DONALD convey their situation! A basic excellence of the whole film comes from the way the characters and their circumstances are individualized (one of the three fugitives is dominant, hard and cunning, one facetious and kindly, one anxious and pathetically stupid); for the framework of the story might easily have been allowed to carry the whole weight even if it were acted by the usual types in the usual cardboard, stage-lighted sets. Apart from this the film's manner, its style has a quick freshness that makes it independently interesting to anyone ready to notice such things, and even those who don't consciously notice such things will find themselves absorbed, at moments not

Rope (Director: ALFRED HITCHCOCK) is technically very interesting; one could discuss for hours the way it was made . . . but is it a technical advance, as distinct from a technical curiosity? I'm not saying it fails as a story: it is most gripping, full of opportunities for that kind of painful suspense that is the trademark of a Hitchcock film. But the effects were nearly all in PATRICK HAMILTON's original play and are nearly all, it seems, attained without any of the devices normally associated with film technique, and the voluminous publicity even seems to suggest that this is a point in the film's favour. "The first film without a cut"—well, why? Isn't the whole point of "cinema" the skilful use of the cut? Why go to such elaborate

trouble for the sake of uninterrupted "ten-minute takes" in a story where no depth of characterization is aimed at? Besides, the effect of a cut is several times deliberately made here by the device of focusing the camera on someone's back, so that the screen is black for a second or two before the next shot of action. No; in spite of some real Hitchcock touches (the use of a swinging door to close a scene, the use of vistas through two connected rooms, the suspense of the nearly-opened chest containing the body) I think *Rope* remains a curiosity—exciting to see, but not to see again. Technicolor is used "principally to note the change in the time of day," but no reason is mentioned for giving JAMES STEWART the unsuitable part of *Rupert Cadell*.

At the end of *Cass Timberlane* (Director: GEORGE SIDNEY), there is almost a literal dénouement: everything has been intricately knotted, and now it is calmly, deliberately untied for no better motive than that the time has come for this to be done. We are simply told that the characters' problems are solved, the

assumption being that if we know what's good for us we'll believe it because if we don't we're stuck with an unhappy ending. Superlative smoothness of production is what makes this film entertaining; that and the personality of SPENCER TRACY as the judge who marries a girl socially beneath his country-club friends. Most of his friends are heavily-built well-tailored deep-voiced executives who you know (it's that kind of picture) will turn out to be crooks.

I'm not sure how to recommend *An Act of Murder* (Director: MICHAEL GORDON) without scaring people away from it. Impossible to suggest the story is a cheerful one, impossible to deny that the superficially "happy ending" really concerns only subsidiary characters and is quite irrelevant to the story's point. A letter-of-the-law judge finds that his beloved wife is incurably ill of an agonizing disease, tries to kill her with himself, survives, and confesses to murder. The weakest part is the sentimental ending. But the film is remarkably well done, always interesting, sometimes moving, full of character and entertaining detail and not without its incidental humours.

R. M.



Rope

NEWS FROM THE ZODIAC

Rupert Cadell JAMES STEWART
Mrs. Atwater CONSTANCE COLLIER
Brandon JOHN DALL
Philip FARLEY GRANGER

Jonquil

I HAVE planted a jonquil bulb
in an arty and crafty pot.

Will it grow and flower,
or not?

I feel its green, thin, inartistic fingers
will stiffly grope
for the warm air,
the bright
surrogate-sunlight of the electric light.

I will arise and go to no Innisfree
but,
hastily gulped the cup of morning tea,
shiver,
wait,
curse,
and catch my morning bus—
and think of my jonquil
living without fuss.

I will return
on many street-lamped eves
to see it growing out of its brown
sleeves.

Life will go on,
I suppose, with its usual
crises,
and deadly nonsense cover all
the newspapers, and war befall, or
not:

but still my jonquil
in its preposterous pot
will steadily progress
to its burgeoning
on some dull day of artificial spring,

and,
suddenly spraying,
Æsop of flowers,
point
this moral:
that the times are out of joint,
but this one lesson in my white flame
burns—
even to Hades, Persephone returns.

R. C. S.

Oliver Messel's Film Designs

WHETHER Mr. Oliver Messel's expressive line was inherited from his maternal grandfather, Linley Sambourne of *Punch*, one cannot say; but it is certain that the cartoonist's critical eye would have delighted in his grandson's latest designs as exquisite works of art, and equally certain that the old man would have known and cared nothing about their ultimate purpose. Therein lies the quality that has always distinguished



"Christopher! Angel! Speak to me—say something."

Mr. Messel's work for the stage, screen, and ballet—and distinguishes his current exhibition at the Leicester Galleries of designs for the forthcoming film *The Queen of Spades*, adapted from Pushkin's story: namely, the charm which invests his slightest drawing, even if it be only a study of the countess's head-dress dashed off in line and wash (and without a single explanatory note) for the wig-maker.

These drawings, then, exist in their own right; and while film-goers will doubtless be impatient to hear what the old countess has to say to her youthful companion in the opera-box, and to learn what is passing behind Lisaveta's pretty brow as she toys with her needlework, students of art will be content to admire figures beautifully brought to life with the aid of a carbon pencil or sepia ink, and swift washes of colour. No less appealing to the eye are the imaginative

interior settings of St. Petersburg at the close of the eighteenth century; and particularly arresting is the lying-in-state scene, with its gleaming catafalque, painted on talc—with a background sketch on paper—to heighten the illusion of a third dimension.

This enchanting "pre-view" closes, alas, on the 25th of this month.

N. A. D. W.

This Poem
is the Only
One of Its
Kind in the
English
Language

THE recital
Of the title
Takes more time
Than the rhyme.



"I shouldn't bother too much—nobody's going to see it."

Patagonian Rhapsody

or From Fish-Glue to Freedom

HOW well I remember the day I met Sonia
In a foul fish-glue factory in far Patagonia!
Her hair was bright blue and she smelt of ammonia.

She took down her oilskins that hung from the banister
And brought me some sea-water boiled in a canister,
Delightfully flavoured with gum-boots and ganister.

I looked in her eyes, which were purple and planetary,
As she softly declared in a manner explanatory
That this sea-water drink was both tasty and sanitary.

Now set she before me a platter with porridge in.
O maiden, I stuttered, pray tell me your origin,
And that of these horrible oilskins you forage in.

O sir, she replied, my papa was Bavarian,
A lifelong non-smoker, a strict vegetarian,
A virtuous dolichocephalous Aryan.

Expelled from his home by a ruthless dictatorship,
He just missed an early but got on a later ship,
An odorous, verminous, cargo- or freighter-ship.

A wind drove us southwards with frightful ferocity;
Before we recovered from such animosity
We ran on these rocks with enormous velocity.

The water, we found, was a bit on the chilly side,
But we scrambled ashore on the country's less hilly side,
The sea dripping from us in dolorous stillicide.

We picked our wet way to this dismal locality
And suffered the natives' uncouth hospitality
(Three quarters plain meanness, one quarter frugality).

And now we make fish-glue from flatfish, by boiling it,
And squirting it out through a nozzle, and coiling it.
Papa turns the handle and I go round oiling it.

Fair maiden, I babbled, how dreadful your pallor is!
Pray, where is your dwelling, and what are your salaries,
And do you consider you get enough calories?

My heart beats with yours in the closest affinity;
Come, let us escape from this barren vicinity,
To stay in such places is sheer asininity.

See, here is my bank book; papa shall examine it,
My ship is soon sailing, together we'll cram in it,
On board I shall buy you a sandwich with ham in it.

So, finding our views had but little disparity,
We fled to the ship with becoming hilarity,
Nor trusted in vain to the sea-captain's charity.

And now we've a cottage embedded in scenery,
And (when I'm not painting the floor of the Deanery)
I grow the traditional nine rows of beanery.

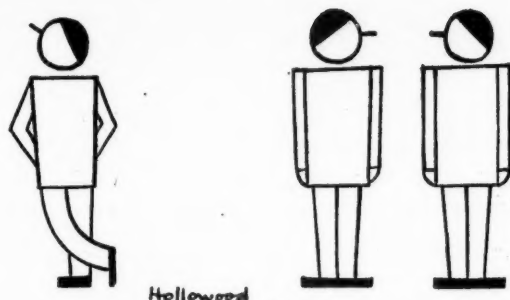
And Sonia (accustomed, indeed, to a thinner time)
Drinks gallons of milk, and quite often fills in her time
By eating twelve eggs between luncheon and dinner-time.

O sweet is my life in a cottage with Sonia,
And sweet is the odour of thyme and begonia
(Enhanced by the tiniest trace of ammonia).

More Fashions

GOING on from where I left off, which was at fashions in manners and that sort of thing, I shall begin with the custom of shaking hands and see if it has changed noticeably with the ages. There is little doubt that hand-shaking, which for the sake of a good mental picture may be assumed to have originated in the days when people strode and clanked, was at first a keen process involving some deliberate hand-gripping and a wide arc of arm; just as early typing involves wavering over the right key and coming down with a clout. As time went on humanity learnt that two approaching hands will meet if each aimer takes the initiative as well as leaving it to the other, so that before long people were shaking hands instinctively and leaving their minds free to be nervous, bright, consciously untidy or even looking their best; and so, for many years, the process has remained much the same. It would be effective to state that the twentieth century has seen some innovations, but all that historians can suggest is that one kind of hand-shake, the fearful squeezing of fingers that leaves the recipient dancing in agony, is nowadays so much of a comic tradition as never to have been anything else. Actually of course people do sometimes in real life get their hands nearly wrung off, but they react by showing no sign.

IF we go on now to compliments, the art of paying them, being paid them and hinting that they are expected, we shall perhaps find some more striking changes in fashion.



"He hasn't been the same since he got into 'Report to the Nation,' issued by His Majesty's Government."

In the old days it seems that more people wrote flowery poems in praise of others. This may be because it is the flowery poems, and not the spontaneous tributes to a good piece of cooking, that get into the Oxford Book of English Verse; but that is not surprising when we reflect that what counts as a spontaneous tribute in the cooking world is often nothing more literary than the word "yum," a word which people who cook rank high in their small triumphs. Farther down the scale, but more frequently, we get the agreeing noise, kind enough but inarticulate, by which eaters show they have heard someone asking if their food is all right. This is not exactly a fashion, but when you add two or three newspapers and a cup for the gravy it does seem sort of modern.

MOVING from food to appearances we come to the people who are wearing something new which has not been noticed, and those who are wearing something old and have suddenly been told they are looking very smart. This definitely has nothing to do with fashion. Life has always been like this, philosophers tell us without expecting to have made it any less puzzling. What has much more to do with the changing times is the way people no longer sit down to the piano after dinner and play Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," thereby losing a wonderful chance of extracting discriminating praise from their unhappy audience. I am not being cynical about after-dinner music—people who spend a quiet evening playing the easy bits of Chopin must have noticed how they are enjoying themselves, as well as how unwarrantably they now ignore the fingering instructions—but I just wanted to show that I know how anyone feels when expected to praise a work of art intelligently at short notice. Higher criticism of the arts, by the way, is quite a modern trend. Those of my readers who have read all Shakespeare, including *Timon of Athens* but not necessarily all three parts of *Henry VI*, will have noticed that when his characters cluster respectfully round a picture all they can say about it is that it is like what it is meant to be; a fine show-up of where the development of thought and print have led us. Going back to the lack of compliments on after-dinner music, in its place to-day we have a huge range of conversational possibilities, such as asking people what their shoes cost and being surprised that their cups and saucers match, which more than make up for it.

THAT conversation has changed enormously since its early days there can be no doubt whatever. In this country alone in the last five hundred years (to take a conveniently round number) there has been nothing less than

an imperceptible revolution in what people say when they open their mouths; imperceptible, that is, to the people saying it, for at no point in history has mankind realized that it is historical, but absolutely obvious to anyone with any sense. The fact that recent years have brought a welter of subtle changes, and that most of my readers have no idea what the last year may have done to the language, only adds to the confusion. Speaking generally, which saves me having to think of anything people say nowadays, I must point out that on the one hand we talk far more about world affairs and politics, and on the other hand far more about carpets.

My readers may wonder why I should choose carpets from among all the talking-points that shortages have given us; it is because I don't think statisticians have any idea of the number of words used daily, in homes large and small, on carpets, coconut matting, linoleum, dark oak stain and even hairy door-mats. That, however, is only one example of the difference between an average modern family and what you get in Fielding and Dickens. Those who point out that novels are not concerned with such things as hairy door-mats have the right idea, but sociologists still maintain that no one in the eighteenth century talked about linoleum, or even lino—a word which philologists prophesy gloomily will have spread in another fifty years to the extent of only disapprovers refusing to say it.

ANDE.

Lament

ALL, all are gone, the old familiar tresses.
Pruned are my buds, vanished my glossy shoots
And nakedness supplants and dispossesses.
All, all are gone, the old familiar tresses.

In vain the patent combs, the hot compresses,
The special oils to stimulate the roots.
All, all are gone, the old familiar tresses.

How hardly now the spirit acquiesces
In bearing base comparison with coots
And billiard balls and patent-leather boots . . .
All, all are gone, the old familiar tresses.

All, all are gone, the old familiar tresses.



The Strike at Ormondroyd's

"SUCH, lads, is your unhappy plight. The seemingly innocuous boiler conceals a velvet glove, and that, in turn, a bludgeon of formidable dimensions. Ormondroyd the tyrant lolls in the gilded courts of the Cleckersyke Junction Railway refreshment rooms, while you, when your day's work is done, crouch beside a dying gasfire, by whose light you can scarcely distinguish the very spillikins and patience cards which are the poor solace of your leisure hours. How long, lads, do you mean to bow beneath the tyrant's will? How long before you rise to strike a blow for liberty, for a decent living wage, and free soap and tooth-brushes for all?"

The agitator ended on a vibrant note, and a low murmur broke from the crowd of moleskin-trousered operatives. They looked at the wild shock-headed figure, whose face was only intermittently visible, partly because of the dim gaslight in this remote corner of the works, but mainly because the soap-box on which he stood had been accidentally placed on a hydraulic turntable, revolving at approximately 14.65 revolutions per second. At that moment a low whistle was heard from the look-out man. As though by magic the crowd melted away, and when a few seconds later Hargreaves the works manager arrived on the scene, armed to the teeth and accompanied by his miniature bloodhound Mazeppa, there was nothing save a litter of old railway magazines, moustache-cups and tattered copies of *How to Pay your Addresses in Society*, to show that the place had ever been inhabited, let alone that it had just witnessed an illegal strike meeting.

What, you may ask in alarm and bewilderment, has happened? Can this be a scene at Ormondroyd and Ugghaw's, that model boilerworks, where strikes and lock-outs are unknown? Set your minds at rest. It could not happen to-day. We must go back some forty years to tell the story of the one and only industrial dispute in the history of Ormondroyd's.

It was a time of industrial unrest all over the country. The tramwaymen's strike of 1906, the musical-box workers' strike of 1907, the Italian warehousemen's lock-out of 1908—all seemed to those in the know to be leading, if not to a climax, at any rate to something. When we at Ormondroyd's first read about the wave of strikes in the *Times Literary Supplement* our first thought was that the famous old firm must not be left behind. We must have a strike

of our own. The only trouble was, what on earth could we strike about? After all, conditions at Ormondroyd's were practically perfect. The basic wage of 5s. 6d. a week, with free candles, had just been raised to 5s. 8d. Every man in the works had recently been presented with hot and cold bath-taps and a bath-mat bearing the legend "Life is Real, Life is Earnest—Long-fellow," and there was even talk of providing a bath to complete the set later on. What more could anyone want?

However, a strike we must have. At a crowded meeting at the Ugghaw Institute it was decided unanimously to form a strike committee. Reuben Dankshaw, the oldest operative, who had taken part in the Luddite Riots, suggested that we ought to have a strike-breaking committee as well. For good measure, we also set up a committee for co-ordinating the activities of the other two committees. Having got so far, we were in something of a dilemma. As there had never been any strikes at Ormondroyd's, nobody quite knew how to set about having one. Old Dankshaw, who might have been expected to know something about the subject, seemed to be labouring under some confusion of mind; whenever the matter came up he would tell how his uncle had had three strikes in 1857, the third one being fatal. In the end it was Mutcliffe who suggested that we should advertise for a professional agitator to help us.

So very soon the *Cleckersyke Stentor* carried an advertisement: *Wanted. Experienced Agitator to Foment Strike in Yorkshire Boilerworks. Cultured Background Essential. Whist-player Preferred, and Knowledge of French*



Horn or Tenor Trombone an Advantage. Home Comforts, Progressive Conversation, Cornish Teas.

I am afraid that the agitator who got the job in the end—there were thousands of applicants—had not really a very cultured background. His name—Sam Bloater—perhaps indicates this. His whist was passable, but his horn-playing, particularly in legato passages, was apt to be ragged. However, he did seem to know a good deal about strikes. Illegal strike meetings, such as the one I described so movingly at the beginning of this memoir, were soon of nightly occurrence. Every wall and pavement, and even the ceilings of our coal-cellars and the bottoms of our frying-pans, bore such notices as "All Out to Town Hall Square Monster Rally, Sat. 3.30," and although in fact there was no Town Hall Square in the neighbourhood, and everyone was far too busy studying Greek Prose Composition on Saturday afternoons to think of doing anything else, yet the whole thing showed keenness. All the same, many thought that things were being carried too far when one night Mutcliffe and Josiah Heppenstall made the works manager an apple-pie bed.

The great moment came. One dull November evening, at a signal from Bloater, we all downed tools simultaneously. Dust-sheets were flung over the boilers. Pickets were posted. Iron-rations of cheroots and sardine sandwiches were issued to all operatives. In a tense silence the only sound that could be heard was the grating of locks and bolts as Mutcliffe and Heppenstall alternately locked each other in and out. The Strike was on.

The next move of course was to be a mass march on Ormondroyd Hall, the Old Man's grim castellated mansion, frowning among groves of blackened oak and cork on a hill above the works. Bloater had ordered lighted torches and iron bars from the Co-operative Stores, but for some reason these had not arrived, and it was widely felt that the waving of a single bicycle-pump by an operative called Plugden made only an indifferent substitute. Still it was a stirring sight when at midnight the march began. All wore their best clothes, and there was a sprinkling of frock-coats here and there; some had fixed scythes to the wheels of their tricycles. Nobody was surprised when the Old Man himself suddenly appeared on his balcony, wearing a long white night-shirt and a tasselled cap embroidered in the Ormondroyd racing-colours (lemon and tomato-red with



S. C. Lewis

"Yes, we know it's a bit early for carols, but we wanted to get in while there's still a sellers' market."

port-wine hoops). At once the roar of voices was stilled.

"Men!" he said simply. "I am told that you are on strike. Oh, shame on you! Never could I have supposed that the fair fame of this great boilerworks of ours would ever be so besmirched. With the motives of those who have thus deluded you I am not concerned. With your boilers, I am. Men! Return to work at once. Your demands, whatever they are, are all granted."

A roar of cheering broke out, not so much at the unparalleled generosity of this speech, as at its classical simplicity of form, its subtle echoes of Demosthenes and Pericles' Funeral Oration. Then we all looked at each other wildly. The Old Man had granted all our demands. But unfortunately, in the general excitement, *we had quite forgotten to have any!*

So that was that. Obviously the

strike was over. Crestfallen, with shamed and angry looks on every face, we turned to go home.

"I will tell you what, my dear fellows," Heppenstall suddenly shouted in his forthright way. "Bloater is the cause of this contretemps, for in defiance of our better nature he has persistently urged us to a course of action which, it was apparent, could not but lead to——" He choked with excitement. "Aye, Bloater is to blame!" a dozen voices took up the cry.

The wretched agitator was found loading a wheel-barrow with meringues in the Old Man's kitchen, in expectation of a general sack of the mansion. When he had received a sound ducking in the linoleum-infested waters of Cleckersyke Clough we all trooped into the sheds for a Special Expiatory Night Shift. So ended the Strike at Ormondroyd's.

Scotengwale

LET Brits inspired by Benelux
Unite in Scotengwale,
And brevity from Berks and
Bucks
In Norf and Suff prevail.

Kirkeudbrightshire may suit the Macs,
Pa., Fla. and Ga. the Yanks,
Far nobler is the Anglo-Sax
Of Notts and Staffs and Lanes.

Awaken, Celts! Let Glam and Pemb
Match Glos and Wilts and Lincs.
Stern Caledonia! Answer them
With Dumb and Wig and Kincs.

Fair maids of Suss! Bold men of Dev!
Be bright with Benelux
And revel in an earthly heav
With Herts and Beds and Bucks.



"Well, it says here on the back of the tariff: 'It will be appreciated if passengers will report any unusual service or attention.'"

Lines Written (Too Soon) After My Party

I SEE them staring, wide-eyed in the dawn;
Those who will have this garden when I'm gone—
The wife, startling as springy as a fawn,
The husband, gaping like a buttered scone
Before it's buttered.
Not a word uttered—
Only the swoosh—very still—of the uprushing sun.

I see their knuckles white, the white of bone,
Gripping, piercing the privet to its pith;
I see them hurry to the telephone,
Summon—they come!—a hundred of their kith
To gaze in masses
Through opera-glasses
Wondering whether it's fact they're beholding or myth.

For there there's growing, there where they were flung,
An olive grove, there where we flipped the pips;
And here, down here, where the cigarette-ends were slung
Tobacco plants luxuriant, plus cork tips,
And with them vying
Through furtive shying
Jungles from sticks which transported the prawn to the lips.

Sub-tropic garden of the careless toss
Warmed by some super-summer into fruit;
Sowings whose future seemed a total loss;
Seeds for whose prospect no one gave a hoot!
And all our Doing
Is just such strewing—
And down there a cow which perhaps was a jettisoned boot.

JUSTIN.



THE ARMING OF THE KNIGHT

MONDAY, November 15th.—Nine times out of ten a well-advertised and much-forecast "row" in the House of Commons turns out to be a damp (or even wet) squib. But as soon as the House assembled to-day it was apparent that the fight over the Steel Bill was to live up to its blurb.

For one thing, Mr. CHURCHILL was himself among the list of speakers in the three-days' debate. That is an event which invariably livens up any debate, and, as it was known that Mr. C. shared to the full (or to the full *plus*, to borrow current Whitehall jargon) his Party's dislike of the Government's plans, there was every expectation of a stern and fierce fight.

However, being a firm believer in suspense as a political and oratorical weapon, Mr. CHURCHILL planned to speak to-morrow, leaving the field to-day to others.

What happened then is a matter for the next long thrilling instalment. To-day, as Mr. GEORGE STRAUSS, the Minister of Supply, rose to move the Second Reading of the Bill, Members on both sides crowded the benches, and Mr. CHURCHILL was there, sitting on his hands and jerking back and forth, as is his custom when particularly alert.

Mr. STRAUSS certainly left none of the Bill uncovered. His speech was so long that the Government Whips showed signs of nervousness—as though they were apprehensive that it would last the whole three days and "talk out" the Bill. However, it was a long Bill, and its details were complex, and no serious student of its plans begrudged the necessarily long exposition.

The Minister's case was that the steel industry was vital to our modern economy and that it could not function properly under private ownership. For one thing, the workers in the industry had "always" wanted it to be nationalized.

He then went on to explain how rather more than a hundred of the most famous and extensive steel firms were to be taken over by the Government, although they would retain their own directors and some of their individuality. The Government, through a controlling body, would replace the present shareholders and exercise a shareholder's rights to influence policy.

And the actual take-over was to be within eighteen months of the passing of the Bill, with May 1st, 1950, as a "notional" date. Why May 1st? Well, said Mr. STRAUSS, with a hopeful

Impressions of Parliament

Monday, November 15th.—House of Commons: The Clash of Steel.

Tuesday, November 16th.—House of Commons: The Clash Continues.

Wednesday, November 17th.—House of Commons: Decision.

Thursday, November 18th.—House of Commons: Radio Noise Reel.

glance over his shoulder at his supporters, that was a date on which the workers had always looked for better things.

The explanation of the Bill over, Mr. OLIVER LYTTLETON, from the Opposition Front Bench, fired a few "sighters" for his leader, some of which landed in the target area and raised howls of fury from the Government's supporters. But everybody was



Impressions of Parliamentarians

61. Mr. G. R. Strauss
Minister of Supply

waiting for the Churchillian howitzer, and, although the debate went on until late at night, the interest in it was only tepid.

TUESDAY, November 16th.—It is a refreshing characteristic of the House of Commons that it can turn aside, at any moment, from the fiercest controversy to deal, sincerely and in perfect amity, with some subject above Party differences. So it was to-day.

Mr. CHURCHILL came in with two packets of notes—one a slim one, the other thick. As soon as Question-time was over, Mr. ATTLEE rose and moved an Address of congratulation to THEIR MAJESTIES, and to Princess ELIZABETH and Prince PHILIP on the happy event, the birth of an infant Prince to the Princess. This had occurred on the evening of November 14th, and Mem-

bers assembled yesterday to the roar of saluting guns and the clang of rejoicing bells.

To-day, in the quiet of the House, Mr. ATTLEE asked the faithful Commons to register their own delight (and that of the nation) at an event so pleasing and so significant for the future.

He said the members of the Royal Family held the affection of all in a manner not surpassed by the best-beloved of their predecessors, and in millions of homes the joyous news had caused pleasure and excitement.

Mr. CHURCHILL seconded the Prime Minister's motion, commenting that above the din of Party strife the Throne stood ancient and calm. Mr. CLEMENT DAVIES, for the Liberals, and Mr. HERBERT BUTCHER, for the Liberal Nationals, added their support, and—although Mr. WILLIE GALLACHER, the Communist Member, felt it his duty to mention that there were many children being born in "sub-lets"—the motion of congratulation was passed without dissent.

Then, as though stressing by contrast the unanimity in loyalty to the Throne, Mr. CHURCHILL produced his *thick* packet of notes and, with obvious satisfaction, stepped to the Table to open his attack on the Steel Bill.

Those who had waited a day for Mr. CHURCHILL's barrage were not disappointed. He was at the top of his form, and his attack had all the old fire and wealth of piled-up adjective and alliteration. And his wit was as sharp and quick as ever.

When he was talking about the workers in the steel industry, someone interrupted from the Government benches, and Mr. CHURCHILL crisply reminded the interjector that, many years ago, he (Mr. C.) had piloted much legislation that had meant much to the working-man. He stressed this seniority by making play with the latest Labour Party slogan, "Ask Your Dad!" and recommending earnest seekers after enlightenment to "Ask Their *Grand*-dad"—he being the holder of that title.

However, it was not all honey. A very considerable admixture of gall and a spot or two of strychnine were noticeable. For instance, he expressed the view that the steel industry would suffer until Socialist meddlers and muddlers stood out of the sunlight. He declared his surprise that the Prime Minister was not ashamed of himself. He announced that the Bill was not a Bill but a plot, designed to keep the Government gang together



"Forgot the appointment, Mr. Pepys? Odds-fish, sir—why don't you keep a diary?"

and in possession of the sweets of office. He defined the Government's action as a Party dodge, but one that, amid obloquy and censure, would end the Labour Party's dismal reign.

Not until the end of the debate did a Governmental foeman worthy of Mr. CHURCHILL's steel enter the lists in the person of Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS. He dealt particularly with complaints that the compensation plans in the Bill were unfair and smacked of confiscation. This he denied, arguing that the Stock Exchange prices of steel stocks and shares *must* be fair, since they represented bargains between willing buyers and sellers.

Later Sir STAFFORD (possibly in the heat of the moment) seemed to suggest that, if they could not "deal with private industrial empires" by peaceful means, Britain's workers might have to take the "ugly alternative" of violence. This caused a gasp of astonishment on the Opposition benches, a dismayed biting of lips in the Government ranks.

Mr. CHURCHILL, angry, was up in a moment—but Sir STAFFORD refused to give way, and the Tory

leader had to shout above the protesting din that the Minister had no right to throw out threats of revolution.

The day's debate ended in uproar.

WEDNESDAY, November 17th.—

Sir ANDREW DUNCAN spoke today without any attempt at eloquence or political "presentation," as a great expert on steel. He was given a silent and respectful hearing by the Government side, even when he said the nationalization plan was a disaster. He was uncompromising about it, and when he sat down he was given an ovation (on the Opposition side of the House) which lasted a full minute.

Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, winding up for the Opposition, expressed the view that the nation had had enough nationalization for a time, and asked (with deceptive innocence) whether the Conservatives would be free democratically to reverse the nationalization decision—or whether Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS would consider that a justification for violent revolution.

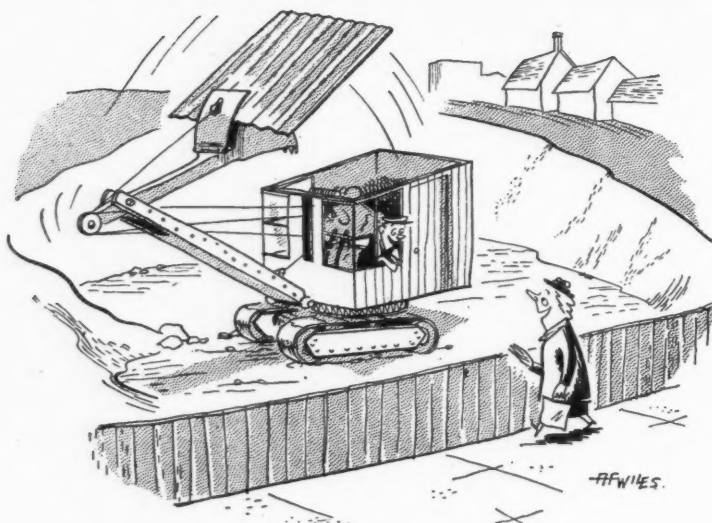
While the Conservatives roared their cheers, Mr. HERBERT MORRISON rose to close the debate, and, after replying to

most of the points raised in the three days, dealt with the "violent revolution" point—which had clearly worried the Government Front bench. He said the Tories were trying to work up a Communist menace to their own advantage. But then he added the strange rider: "*Far better leave that job to us!*" However, he was understood to say (amid a tornado of noise) that there certainly would *not* be a violent revolution if the Tories reversed the nationalization decision.

The march through the division lobbies gave the Government a majority—373 votes to 211. Both sides registered record attendances.

THURSDAY, November 18th.—Mr.

ATTLEE and Mr. CHURCHILL had a "barg" on the subject of European Federation. Then the Wireless Telegraphy Bill was considered, and a great deal of noise was raised about the proposal to punish with imprisonment refusal to suppress electrical noises on the radio and television. The Government showed a pleasant willingness to reduce the severity of the proposed penalties.



"Lovely morning, Mrs. Jones!"

Short Guide to South America

I

WE have returned from our travels. "Glad to be home, old boy?" Of course. But this day last week we were swimming in clear sea-water with a temperature of 70 degrees (the sea). A week before that the sea was 84 degrees (too warm): and, sweet though home is, the change is noticeable. That is the fault of the great ship *Andes*, which whizzes from Buenos Aires to Southampton (six thousand miles) in fifteen days. Too fast. No sooner have you settled down to tropical life about the dear old Equator than you are looking for your woolly undies again.

Well, we have visited Spain (eight hours), Portugal (thirty hours), the Canaries (twelve hours), Brazil (about forty-eight hours), Uruguay (about twelve), Argentina (nine days), and France (three hours). We are writing authoritative books about all these foreign lands, of course: and these will appear "as soon as may be", as the Statutes say. Meanwhile, as a kind of "trailer" to these fascinating works, here are a few travel-notes, if you can stand them (and, if not, it can't be helped).

The Sea.—The Sea behaved very well, there and back. All the way to Rio de Janeiro it was sunny and smooth, and even the famous "Bay" was like a large blue lake. (This was in September.) Only on two days, coming back,

was there any motion noticeable to an ancient mariner: and only on one night, entering the Channel, did one slide about the bunk a little, and a French couple complained to the Captain.

Lisbon.—Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, our oldest ally, is a very fine city on a fine river, but you are almost certain to be run over. On no account proceed on foot. The Portuguese have a queer foreign currency called *escudos*, and you do not get many of them for a £. Fortunately, however, Lisbon is populated by a very hospitable and charming tribe called Pinto Basto, who number, they say, about four thousand and three. If you are lucky enough to meet one of them (and it is not difficult) he will drive you round the fine heights of Cintra to merry Estoril. And if you are good he will take you to lunch at our old friend the beautiful Hotel Aviz, with the fabulous honeymoon suite and Helen of Troy bath in pink marble. You must go into the bar, too, sit down on the starboard side and study the opposite wall. There you will see set out in large letters the whole of the history of Portugal, with the names of the great explorers and the places they discovered. It is done in Portuguese and English: which is rather pleasing.

The Canary Islands.—We would bet quite a lot that you do not know the origin of the word "Canary". Before

we sailed, we looked up the Islands in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and were astonished to read there a remark of the Elder Pliny. "Canaria", he said, "so called from the multitude of *dogs* of great size." We had never guessed that those dear little yellow birds were named after large dogs. But we still looked forward to a walk in the woods at Las Palmas, Grand Canary, with the little yellow birds singing in the branches above us. Alas, there are no little yellow birds: indeed, there are no woods—if you exclude bananas and oranges. Indeed, from the sea the hills look so brown and barren that most passengers don't go ashore but buy dolls on the quay. That is a mistake. Up the hill are beautiful gardens with a profusion of flowers ranging from the rose to the cactus; and over the hills, they say, where the lava flowed, there are fertile valleys full of vines. There is also one of the most beautiful little theatres we have seen. You can go to the top of the cathedral in a lift, or drive alarmingly to an eminence from which you look down into an enormous volcanic crater. If, like us, you prefer the lower levels, you can swim from a magnificent sandy shore or eat at a fine hotel. So go ashore at Las Palmas. Many of the great dogs, by the way, sit in stony state, well sculpted, in the square before the cathedral. But we saw not a single canary—not even a stone one. Heigh-ho!

The Ocean.—After Las Palmas there is a nice long ocean run (nine days) with no land or foolish foreign currency to trouble you. It gets warmer and warmer, the officers are in whites, the swimming-pool roars into action, all the men appear in gay shirts and trousers, and dazzling new swim-things are exhibited by the ladies. Most of the population huddle in the shade, and those who salute the blessed sun grow more and more like prawns. The North Star sinks lower and lower and at last is no more. We lose the Great Bear and feel a little lost ourselves. But there on the port side are Orion and Sirius (No. 1 Star)—and, behold, Canopus (No. 2)! How odd that the Creator should have put the two top stars so near each other, and how sad that in London, though we see Sirius from time to time, we can never see Canopus! But what do you care? What, indeed, did most of our fellow-passengers care for the luminaries mentioned: and how many could have named them? Two, perhaps three—not counting the barman Charlie, whose astronomical education we began, between beers. If we were still capable of feeling wonder about the human race, we should have wondered at their

way of life in this delightful part of the Ocean.

First, it is at this time, when the heat is approaching, when the thermometer rises with every revolution of the screws, that "Organized Games" begin. You could understand it in the colder latitudes, if a Committee, with Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, were appointed to compel the passengers to play competitive deck-tennis, deck-quoits and so on, to keep the circulation circulating, and stimulate a healthy sweat. But no, it is now, when they are sweating mildly all the time, and sweating madly when they pull a suit-case from under the bed, that they are organized, dragooned, and bullied to wander, sweating, about the ship looking for Mr. Smith, or Mr. Jones, whom they do not know, and play hot games with them all morning, and evening. An organized passenger at this period of the voyage has as many appointments as the Prime Minister. We watched them standing before the notice-board at night, with a harassed air, wondering how they were to get through the heavy programme of the morrow.

But then, what happens in the afternoon? To pass through these waters in good weather, with the sun shining always on a dark-blue velvet sea, is a magical experience, which some have not enjoyed before and many may never enjoy again. Personally, we could happily steam backwards and forwards between the Canaries and Brazil for quite a long time. That cannot be arranged at present—but meanwhile we would not waste a minute of this delicious life. We are in the pool before breakfast: we are in, or about, it most of the morning (doing a little homework, of course, between dips): and we are there again soon after lunch, risking indigestion and sun-stroke, maybe, but making the most of the fleeting days. But after lunch we are nearly always alone. Our fellows, after one day in or near the tropics, think they must behave as if they had been living in the plains of India all their lives, or, like the ship's officers, had been up half the night. They cannot live without their "siesta". Off they go to their dark cabins and sink into a hoggish stupor till the time of tea. Each to his taste, of course: but they have missed two hours of sun upon the lovely sea. Our sister-ship passes and hoists a signal for us: flying-fish dart away from our bows: we pass the famous rocks of St. Paul, the peak of a vast submarine mountain: the sun is hot, but the South-East Trades blow sweetly on this warm old frame. But they are lying in the

dark under an electric fan. What a pity!

After dark, too, there is cause for wonder. We have crossed the well-known Equator, with some good old-fashioned foolery. But now we are in a new, confusing world. The sun is in the North at noon, a most extraordinary arrangement. At night the great Orion comes up out of the sea, but *upside down*, most disturbing; and about 2.0 or 3.0 in the morning he will be right overhead, a thing no Londoner has ever seen. Some of our London stars are with us still: but to the South we haven't, at first, a clue. These skies are poorly supplied with constellations: but there are good individual stars to be hunted down, Canopus, Achernar, Peacock, and the two Centauri. And, of course, it is a duty to look for that elusive and (hush!) not very impressive formation called the Southern Cross. All this requires application, and the craning of necks, it is true; and the hair is ruffled in the breeze: yet it is worth it. But the

passengers have no time for these researches: for they are caught in a whirl of Organized Amusement. While we are admiring the blaze of heaven and wondering which is *Peacock* and which is *Achernar* they are sitting in the dark before a film they saw in London months ago. They are having a Race-Game, playing Bridge or a gambling game, or (sometimes, we confess, with our assistance) dancing. One is regarded as slightly eccentric, and even unsociable, if one misses a film in order to see the stars. *Chacun à son goût*, of course: but *Heigh*—as we think we said before—*ho!*

(Next Week. *The Truth about Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina.*)

A. P. H.

Impending Apology

"NOTICE"

A copy of Winston Churchill's 'Second World War' (Vol. I—The Gathering Storm) has been placed in the Fiction Library.
Notice on the Officers' Mess notice board in Stonehouse Barracks.



F'tb'll on P'p'r

THE newsprint shortage continues and its harmful effects multiply. Quite recently a small boy looked up at me from behind a newspaper and asked "Where is P'sm'th?" He pronounced it "Psmith" with the "P" hard as in Wodehouse. I laughed and said surely there couldn't be a



place called Psmith. So he showed me the word printed in the newspaper. It was P'sm'th all right, set in minute type in a very narrow column and accompanied by Man C, H'd'sf'd, Sheff W, B'm'gh'm, N'e'stle, S'd'l'nd and fifteen more.

A feeling of shame engulfed me and I looked with pity on the boy. I questioned him about other well-known football clubs and my worst fears were confirmed. We spoke different languages. He had never heard, apparently, of Tottenham Hotspur, Southampton or West Bromwich Albion, yet he was amazingly knowledgeable about the records of teams called Tottm, Soton and Wbroma. Very slowly and patiently I explained things to him—the Dollar Gap, the pulp situation, narrow "economy" columns, the art of abbreviation and so on, but from the set of his face I saw that he hated it. He looked at me accusingly, as though he knew that my generation had betrayed his.

I did what I could to make amends, pressing on immediately with his re-education. It meant quite a lot of research one way and another, so I decided to keep a record of my findings. Without it this article could never have been written.

There are eighty-eight teams in the four divisions of the Football League, I told P. (the boy), and fifty-one of them have a handle of some sort to their geographical place-name. Nine are called Town; thirteen, City; ten,

United; four, County; four, Rovers; three, Athletic; two, Albion; and two, Wanderers. In addition there are such singleton oddments as Wednesday, Forest, Orient, Villa, Rangers and North End. This list astonished P. For him, "U" had always meant University and "C," College. I don't know what he had made of "Wed." Naturally, he wanted to know how these peculiar names had originated, so I said it was getting late and that we must leave something, mustn't we, for next time.

At our next session he agreed that Town, City and County explained themselves, but he thought United very puzzling until I drew comparisons from the great world of business and indicated many a famous Consolidated, Amalgamated, Associated, Incorporated and Federated. We were both of the opinion that a Manchester, Rotherham or Sheffield Consolidated would make a nice change. Turning to the Rovers, Wanderers and Rangers, I explained that many great clubs had begun their careers as homeless urchins and until they had reached maturity could only take part in away matches. I said that outside the League he might find Ramblers, Wayfarers, Nomads, Pilgrims and even Stragglers, but that none of them would equal the brilliant cadence of Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers or Queen's Park Rangers. He repeated "Bolton Wanderers" over to himself several times and seemed satisfied with the result.

When we passed on to the Athletics of Charlton, Oldham and Bournemouth and Boscombe (old athletic clubs that are now athletic football clubs) P. claimed five to my three. He had been misled of course by the shameful abbreviation of Alexandra



Early Rovers
(Courtesy, "Blackburn Argus")

and Argyle to "A." Albion stumped me. The word is seldom used nowadays outside the sport columns, though it used to serve as a stand-in on occasion for England, Britain ("Perfidious Albion") and Scotland. There

are English Albions at West Bromwich and Brighton and a team called Albion Rovers (two handles) somewhere in Scotland. P. and I would welcome a little assistance here from readers with precise knowledge.

For sheer beauty of language, I said, we must admit that the Scottish clubs have a definite advantage: England has nothing to compare with:

Hamilton Academicals *versus*
Heart of Midlothian
Raith Rovers *versus* Partick
Thistle
Hibernians *versus* Glasgow Celtic
Dunfermline Athletic *versus* Stenhousemuir

P. agreed. Then somewhat nervously he drew my attention to certain



names which he considered equally fair and melodious—Old Millhillians, Old Haberdashers, Harlequins and Wasps—but I was quick to reveal their lack of harmonic depth and to point out that we were dealing with football anyway and not that other code.*

Next, I told him that of the eighty-eight teams in the Football League fourteen wear white shirts; fourteen, blue shirts; thirteen, red shirts; seven, red-and-white striped shirts; seven, blue-and-white striped shirts; and only one, green shirt. He seemed very disappointed with this limited palette and asked why it was that nearly all the footballers he'd seen had worn hooped jerseys. This called for an immediate explanation. I told him that the footballers he had seen were not . . .*

H'D.

*This correspondence must now cease. (Editor.)

Teas

THE new repertory company at the Muntion-on-Sea Pavilion has started afternoon performances again on Thursdays, and for one-and-six you can get tea brought to you in the interval on a tray. Edith and I thought we would try it last week, but it resulted in such nervous tension that we shall not do so again. The system is that as you enter the inner vestibule of the Pavilion after purchasing your tickets you queue up behind a little table and they take the number of your seats and you hand over your money, and in the first interval (if you are very lucky) or in the second interval (if you are not so lucky) the tea is brought to you.

Immediately the curtain goes down after the first act all the doors at the back of the Pavilion are opened and there is a mad rush of girls bearing little trays. The staff is small during the winter, but the girls have clearly been chosen for their athletic ability, and the speed with which they hare down the alley-ways with a tray in each hand suggests that if they had been picked for the sprint events in the Olympic games we might have made an even better show than we did.

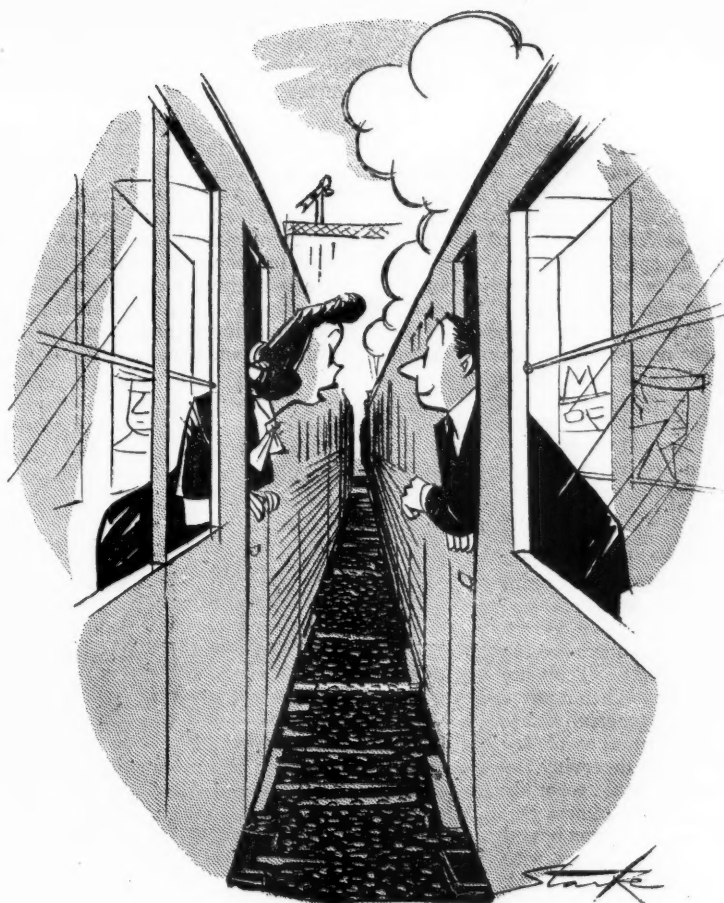
Edith and I were in J5 and J6, and we sat back complacently and waited for our teas to be brought. Very good teas they appeared to be, from what we could see. A good fat sandwich, three pieces of quite well-spread bread-and-butter, and a couple of luscious-looking cakes, with a little pot of tea and a jug of milk and a jug of hot water. It made us feel quite ravenous just to look at them.

The precious minutes passed. H5 and H6 got their trays and started attacking the provender in rather a wolfish manner. Then I5 and I6 got theirs, and Edith and I began to lick our lips. Then, to our disgust, K5 and K6 were served, a gross injustice which, however, we accepted with fixed smiles. No doubt we would be served next, but it was maddening to hear K6 crunching what we felt were, by rights, our own cakes.

Then the lights went down and the curtains went up.

"We'll enjoy it all the more in the second interval," said Edith, "because we shall be hungrier."

"Shush," said K6 in a reproving well-fed voice, and then dropped his milk-jug with a loud clatter. I trust I am not of a revengeful disposition, but I felt that it served him right, and I hoped the milk had gone over his trousers.



"Marry you? But I hardly KNOW you!"

At last the second interval came, and once again the fleet-footed girls burst in from the back. No longer, however, was there any attempt to serve people in alphabetical or numerical order. In their wild anxiety to get all the orders delivered before the lights went down again they threw all discipline aside. A family party of seven in Row Q got three of their trays and started quarrelling as to who should have them, and a morose man in Z4 who had clearly abandoned hope was served with such suddenness that he shot a chocolate éclair into the lap of a stout lady in a silk dress in Y3, who consumed it absentmindedly before he could ask for it back.

It is difficult to exaggerate the nervous tension of that second interval. Our hopes rose as J12 was served, and then sank again as all the girls suddenly made a mass attack on the Ms and Ns, who had been expressing their restiveness in undignified cat-calls.

At last it seemed that everybody was satisfied but us. The dastardly K6 and his wife (if she *was* his wife) were crunching their last cakes in a marked manner.

"We're bound to be next," said Edith.

Then the curtain went up and we knew that all was lost. Limp and exhausted we sat back to watch the play. Then we distinctly heard the abominable K6 say to his wife (if the poor woman had indeed the misfortune to be tied to him for life): "I wonder who those teas we had were really meant for? They were not at all bad. We must order some for ourselves next week." D. H. B.

"Miss Perriek returned to London, and on the following day, knowing all there was to know, she unleashed her salvo."

"Varsity," Cambridge.

Any relation to Fido?

FROM the moment when M. MAURICE CHEVALIER comes out in his tilted straw-hat and his beautiful blue suit with its ribbon of the Legion of Honour, to tell us that his father was a painter, not that sort of painter—making a few adjustments to a portrait in the air with an imaginary brush—but this sort—walloping distemper heartily up and down, he holds us spellbound for a couple of hours on a stage empty but for his discreet pianist, Mr. FRED FREED, and a grand piano. How does he do it? He has lost none of his enormous charm, but admittedly his tricks are limited, even a trifle dated, and on the evening I saw him a bad cold had reduced a voice which was never remarkable. He boasts little of the wild originality of Danny Kaye, and though he has impudence it is totally different from the dynamic cheek of some of our native comedians. His manners are too good for that. They are impeccable. When a party arrived disgracefully late in the front row of the stalls, richly deserving the crack they would certainly have got from almost any other star, MAURICE bowed gently to the ladies with infinite courtesy. I think it is this, the fact that he could go into any club or bar in the world and pass as he is just for a very delightful fellow, that explains why an English audience, of which I was glad to be one, would have liked him to go on for at least another two hours.

But behind this front line of polished geniality, make no mistake of it, there lies greatness. He is a master of gesture. His wink has cosmic implications. His elastic lower lip, thrust out suddenly to point a phrase, becomes the only thing that matters in the whole theatre. Even the rake of his hat is tuned exactly to the mood of a song, and his hands, which he uses more as an Englishman or an American might use them, can give you the entire hang of a situation in one graphic movement. As for his singing, its accuracy of timing and delicacy of inflection far more than make up for the size of his voice. When he sings about love, as he frequently does, well, it really is love, young and gay and passionate, and worth all the

At the Play

Maurice Chevalier (LONDON HIPPODROME)—*The Third Man* (ARTS)—*Slings and Arrows* (COMEDY)

disgusting synthetic emotion that has ever been drained into microphones by crooners. Before his French songs he gives us a wonderfully dramatic little account of what they are about; as a teller of simple stories he qualifies easily for the Children's Hour, and there is no higher compliment.

Bouncing, shuffling, strutting, always enjoying himself, sometimes as a Chinese mandarin, sometimes a dock-



MAURICE FILLS THE HIPPODROME.

side tramp, but more often as himself, he has our hearts in his hand. "Mimi," "Louise," "Valentine" and other old favourites go down well, and so do a lot of new songs, many with his own lyrics. One, "A Barcelone," he wrote to encourage a pair of Spanish sisters whose talents caught his eye on a provincial tour, and later turned it into an uproarious parody for himself; another, touching in its sincerity, is "Quai de Bercy," in which two penniless lovers celebrate their meeting by sniffing thirstily at the great butts of good wine waiting for the gastronomes of Paris. Naturally Paris figures largely in a programme which embraces grave and gay, tough and gentle, and which shows off this most likeable of entertainers to perfection.

The full-length play with only two characters holds the same kind of irregular fascination as the mandrill at the Zoo. It is an interesting oddity. We look at it with wonder for the ingenuity which has made so curious a pattern possible, and even with pleasure; but we should not choose to do so often, because there is a consciousness that what we are seeing is only remarkable *considering*, and that with a wider range of characters our enjoyment might have been still greater. At the same time the limitations that restrict the author of such a piece need be no handicap to the actors, who share all the opportunities between them. This is a stern test, but has Miss FLORA ROBSON, for instance, ever had a better part, or done more with it, than that of the girl in *Close Quarters*?

The Third Man at the Arts is all but full length, running with intervals for nearly two hours, and during all that time Miss LUCIE MANNHEIM and Mr. MARIUS GORING, alone but for a few telephone calls and a few impartial stars winking knowingly in the sky of Montmartre, keep our attention by skilful variations of mood and pace. This story of lovers' jealousy takes a fairly conventional course, but M. LOUIS VERNEUIL works it out neatly and without forcing the invisibility of the third side of the triangle, a *Monsieur Lamberthier*. (This was the title of the play in French; the translator's name is not given.)

We are told all we need to know about him. He is a rich financier who has seduced *Germaine* when she was down-and-out, and blackmailed her into continuing to be his mistress after her marriage to the neurotic young artist *Maurice*. From their wedding-day *Germaine* has to lie, which she does expertly, but bit by bit *Maurice* finds her out until, in a storm of jealousy, he kills *Lamberthier*. *Germaine* is now prepared to tell any lie, and implicate anybody, to save him; but *Maurice* has had enough of twisting, and goes off to the police. It is a formal little play, and, of its kind, good. Miss MANNHEIM gives her best performance as yet at the Arts, strong but restrained, and Mr. GORING puts a razor-edge on

Maurice's nerves. Watching their quick manoeuvres I got mentally the same ache of concentration that one gets when watching two expert players of table-tennis, but that is a further tribute to their acting and to the intelligence of Miss MANNHEIM's production.

One's prophetic aunt, had she been present at the first night of *Slings and Arrows*, at the Comedy, would certainly have pointed to the opening curtain and augured a miasma of theatrical gossip which might well prove impenetrable. This curtain was covered with such advertisements as "Messel, Scenic Artist, Wood-Graining a Speciality," and "Beaton for Passport Photos." One's aunt would have been right, for the show demands a detailed Stop-press knowledge of the public and private goings-on of a small coterie based on one or two of the leading stage eating-houses, and for my part I am thankful I lack this equipment. Whether a large enough circle possesses it to give this very dull revue a run seems in the highest degree doubtful.

Miss HERMIONE GINGOLD, who has devised it with Mr. CHARLES HICKMAN, is poorly served with turns relying on audacity rather than on wit. It is not sufficient for her to put on fancy-dress and try to gloss shoddy lines with burlesque, because we know how truly funny she can be, given the right stuff.

The best of an indifferent selection is "Blanchisseuse Heureuse," a solo by Mr. ARTHUR MACRAE, in which she appears as a fashionable washerwoman operating in diamonds from the Ritz, but even that is not as good as it should be. Her only general sketches which come off at all are a rag of Miss HERLIE's *Medea* (again by Mr. MACRAE) and another by Mr. LESLIE JULIAN JONES of *Bless the Bride*—that sturdy native challenger of the American invaders can afford to take a little satire.

Mr. WALTER CRISHAM, who won our admiration for his gallant struggle with a sore throat, has only one chance to display his skill in dancing and only two songs worth singing. Miss GRETCHEN FRANKLIN scores with a song of her own, but on the whole the supporting cast has promise, not maturity. A well-deserved parody of Sir Alexander Korda's majestic poster to the critics is an almost isolated example of the wider sweep of intelligent comment that we expect from intimate revue. Dressing-room tittle-tattle is not an acceptable substitute.

ERIC.

At the Opera and Ballet

Siegfried (COVENT GARDEN)
Selina (SADLER'S WELLS)

THE short Wagner season at Covent Garden opened with an excellent performance of *Siegfried* in German. SET SVANHOLM, who sang the title-rôle, is the best *heldentenor* we have heard since Lauritz Melchior; ASTRID VARNAY was a fine *Brunnhilde*, though she was nervous on this first night, and—all too rare an experience—we beheld a pair of heroic lovers who were really good to look upon and did not resemble impassioned humpty-dumpties.

The first act was splendid, from the very first bars when, amid subterranean mutterings and wreathing mists, we catch glimpses of the Ring, until *Siegfried* forges *Nothung* and with it cleaves the *Nibelung's* anvil in two. The sound of the *Nibelung's* insistent laborious hammering as he toils in his dark cavern reminds one of a captive trying frantically to burst his bonds, and PETER KLEIN invested his whole performance with this feeling. He is the best *Mime* we ever remember. In his dwarf's lust for power and his determination to possess the Ring by guile and deceit, as his puny strength is of no avail against the giants, *Mime* is contemptible and hateful; but here he was moving too. His terror and despair at his inability to forge *Nothung*, and his desperate attempts to avert the fate that awaits him at *Siegfried's* hands, were heartrending. The *Alberich* of GRAHAME CLIFFORD—harsh, mean and consumed with hate—was the best possible contrast.

HANS HOTTER's *Wotan* was magnificent. In his robe of blue, with his flowing white beard, his long spear and the wide hat of the *Wanderer* he was a truly godlike figure, and in the resonance and splendour of his voice one felt the full tragedy that was to overtake the gods. His performance was completely satisfying, for he has the sheer beauty of tone that Wagner demands. It is this that SET SVANHOLM lacks, excellent artist though he is. He has ample power for *Siegfried's* forging song: "No—thung! No—thung! Neidliches Schwert!" but not the golden quality that makes every note of this thrilling music strike one to the heart till one's being rings like the anvil under *Siegfried's* hammer.

The second act, against all the rules, was stolen by *Fafner* the dragon, a bumbling, elderly creature who sang and blew smoke out of his nostrils all at once. He seemed to be a mixture of

the Jabberwock and of Frank Sinatra, who boasts of being able to sing whether breathing in or out; and to judge from the way he swayed all the time from his right feet to his left, he was in agonies from corns. When *Siegfried's* vorpal blade snicker-snacked him out of existence and he blew an expiring puff of smoke and rolled over in a heap (his legs and the attached corns having retired backstage) we felt quite sad. We hate to suggest that so lovable a beast should be returned to stock, but his appearance is rather too distracting. So is that of EDITH FURMEDGE as *Erda*, when she rises waist-high from the earth to hear *Wotan* pronounce the doom of the gods. Just why she should have to resemble a turnip is a mystery.

These, however, are small things in comparison with the joy of hearing so excellent a performance of *Siegfried*. The tone of the orchestra was dull, but KARL RANKL took care that the singers should not be smothered as they are all too often. The producer was FRIEDRICH SCHRAMM.

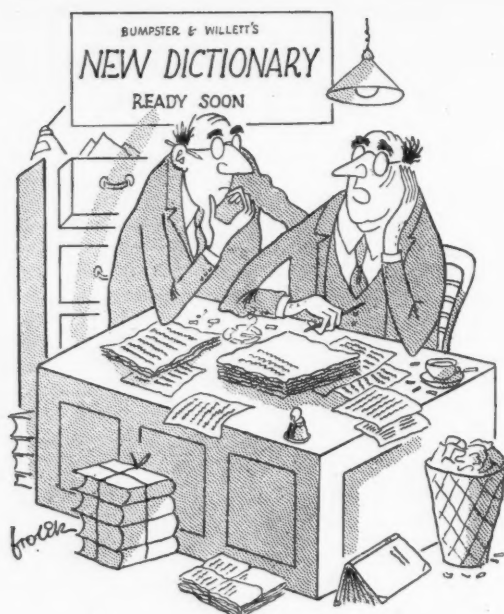
ANDREE HOWARD and PETER WILLIAMS, creators of *Selina*, the new ballet at Sadler's Wells, are not injured to pruning—that agonizing process during which every writer puts a ruthless pen through his choicest inspirations, bitter experience having taught him that they are the snares of the Prince of Darkness. *Selina* begins as a romantic period-piece. The music is early Rossini, arranged by GUY WARRACK. A poet is seated by a waterfall amid a craggy landscape seeking inspiration for a sonnet. Naiads produce a vision, which becomes a reality in the shape of *Selina*, charming ELAINE FIFIELD, who comes dancing through the woods with her brother *Tom*. The poet of course falls in love with her, when suddenly we are introduced to a stage-villain and a Nervo-and-Knox comic witch.

The ballet which began so charmingly turns into a wild knock-about burlesque. The Prince of Darkness baited his snare with that comic witch all too successfully, with the result that *Selina* is neither good romance nor good burlesque—which is a great pity, for much of the choreography is excellent and the scenery and costumes are charming.

D. C. B.

Conjugation of the Verb "UNO"

Uno	Unanimous
Unesco	Uveto
Unite	They won't.



"I'm stumped for a word to go between OPISTHOBANCHIATE and OPISTHOCCELIAN."

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Count Sforza on Italy

IN *Italy and Italians* (FREDERICK MULLER, 12/6) Count CARLO SFORZA, the famous Italian statesman, has collected a number of lectures which he gave in the University of California in 1942. A survey of Italy presented in a series of vivid and informal summaries of its chief aspects, this book will much more than double the knowledge and understanding of Italy possessed by most of its English readers. The author analyses the Italian feeling for nature, which, in contrast with the restless Teutonic longing for an Eden beyond the horizon, is tranquil and idyllic, the product of a rural existence now three millenniums old. He disposes of the mythical South Italian, idle and carefree, and puts in his place the silent, tough peasant of a harsh and sterile land. He marks the principal Italian faults as self-denigration alternating with boastfulness, and points to the misfortunes which befell Italy because, having been unified at the same time as Germany, it felt that it should pursue a similar destiny. The glories of ancient Rome, Mussolini's favourite theme, do not greatly appeal to Count SFORZA, who, with Napoleon and his modern disciples in mind, regards a centralized state as synonymous with a police state. His ideal is a loosely federated Italy in which, as in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the great cities, Florence, Venice, Milan, Genoa, Naples, will sustain and be sustained by the surrounding peasantry. It is, he says, on this tradition of local patriotism, disrupted by the Fascists, that the Italian social fabric must be based.

H. K.

Father of the United Nations

At their meeting in the Kremlin on October 25th, 1943, Mr. CORDELL HULL and Marshal Stalin began their conversation by discussing rafting. The American Secretary

of State told the Russian dictator how he "had bound logs into rafts in Tennessee, using hickory walings. Stalin described how his people bound rafts together with vines." Their conversation was surely unique in diplomatic annals as a prelude to momentous negotiations. Nevertheless it aptly expressed the similarity of family circumstances and early upbringing that linked the Georgian peasant's son with the son of a small farmer and lumberman in Tennessee in a mutual sympathy and understanding born of common experiences and knowledge. It is not therefore surprising to find the opinions recorded in *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 50/-) that "any American having Stalin's personality and approach might well reach high public office," and that Stalin is "one of the great statesmen and leaders of this age." From 1933 to 1945 Mr. CORDELL HULL, as Secretary of State, conducted and largely formulated American foreign policy, and throughout these eventful years he resolutely carried out President Roosevelt's "Good Neighbour" policy. The failure of the League of Nations inspired Mr. CORDELL HULL with the resolve to build up a new and stronger international organization to take its place. His unremitting efforts resulted in the setting up of the United Nations organization and caused him to be justly regarded by President Roosevelt as "Father of the United Nations." These lucid and well-ordered Memoirs, containing as they do the fullest and best-informed account of American foreign policy during Mr. CORDELL HULL's Secretaryship, are an invaluable mine of information for historians and also a fascinating revelation of the inner workings of international relations.

I. F. D. M.

Entente Cordiale

The fourth volume of Mrs. BELLOC LOWNDES' reminiscences was bound to exert less enchantment than its predecessors. *Toute française de cœur*, the writer had only London to depict; and the London of *A Passing World* (MACMILLAN, 15/-) at that. But 1914-18 gave this great-hearted and well-endowed woman a close-up of much besides England's "amazing power of self-deception." The book's social and professional interests are those of a novelist for whom society means character and episode as well as friends and acquaintances; and novel-writing means easier circumstances as well as congenial society. M. Cambon, you note, warned his compatriot that nothing high society said was going to happen ever did. The *on dits* are less notable than the portraits. (Haldane and Margot Asquith are especially good.) "The most interesting afternoon in my life" was spent with the Belgian lawyer briefed to defend Nurse Cavell; and it is significant that Mrs. BELLOC LOWNDES interprets the famous "I must have no hatred or bitterness for anyone" as referring not to the Germans but to the nurse's indiscreet colleagues.

H. P. E.

The Edwardians

Describing Putney and its inhabitants in *Buried Alive*, Arnold Bennett stigmatized his Edwardian contemporaries as a gloomy and decadent race. This is not how they appear to Mr. FREDERICK WILLIS in his *Jubilee Road 101* (PHENIX HOUSE, 15/-) as he looks back at them through the transfiguring mists of time. These delightful impressions of London as it appeared to a poor, hard-working but not discontented youth at the opening of this century begin with the death of Queen Victoria. There were no cars on the London streets then, and even ten years later hansom cabs and horse-drawn buses were still fairly plentiful,

though destined very shortly to vanish for ever. Coffee houses provided roast beef, or some other meat dish, potatoes, cabbage, Yorkshire pudding and a choice of sweets for a total cost of eightpence; and public-houses were open for fifteen hours a day. The country round London could be quickly reached on a bicycle. Edgware was an old-world town and Croydon was reached from Purley by a bridleway across cornfields and through a pine wood. Instead of cinemas there were music-halls, and each had its own character and regular patrons. And so the panorama of a richer, more varied and more picturesque age than ours unrolls; with here and there a comparison in our favour, the most striking being between the anemic ragged factory girl of forty years ago, with poor physique and execrable accent, and the neatly dressed, intelligent and healthy factory girl of to-day.

H. K.

Answer to Anarchy

Between the guillotining of Robespierre and the arrival of Napoleon as First Consul, lies that grimy little patch of bureaucratic history, the Directory. France felt that she might lose the chief prize of the Revolution—the ending of privilege without responsibility—if she recalled the Bourbons. Alternatively she might renew the Terror by inclining to the Jacobins. Hence the Directory, and bread at fifty francs a loaf. In a brilliant and closely-documented study of *Brumaire: the Rise of Napoleon* (WERNER LAURIE, 12/6), Mr. J. B. MORTON produces that admirable brand of past history which enlivens present politics. "The only immediate reply to anarchy is," he insists, "despotism"; and the spiritual apathy of France, with Barras on his self-styled "see-saw" between Reds and Royalists, could only be shattered from without. Hence the nine-and-twenty-year-old Napoleon, crowned with the laurels and backed by the troops of Lodi, arrived to take over without, if possible, a military coup. This face-saving necessity makes the narrative intriguing in every sense. Each conspirator, and counter-conspirator, lives: from embryo Communists like "Gracchus" Babeuf to lascivious Egerias like Theresia Cabarrus.

H. P. E.

Nicolas Bentley Wrote the Words.

The Tongue-Tied Canary (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 8/6) is a thriller in the first person telling how an ex-parachuting-secret-agent is invited back by his M.I. branch to trail a courier bringing a new code to the leader in Britain of the long-term Nazi underground. At the front door of the case comes in a mysterious girl with a taste for good music, while out at the back goes a helpful little chambermaid, with a bullet in her head. To get rid of her body our hero takes it home to the country at night, upright beside him in his car, and having weathered inspection by a motor-cop has to face the stiffer test of meeting his own dog, out hunting poachers with the keeper. This scene in the moonlit wood is as exciting as you could wish. After adventures which follow one another almost too breathlessly he runs his man to earth in a rough-house in Hampstead, the code being ingeniously contained in the tinklings of a musical-box. Why he thus walks unarmed into the enemy's camp and why his top-secret M.I. boss should turn up openly at the critical moment with a large force of police when it was understood that if he got into difficulties nothing could possibly be done to help him, is not explained, but on the whole Mr. BENTLEY has extricated himself fairly neatly. His writing can be a little too jocular, but it has some very good phrases and the atmosphere of the story is admirably natural.

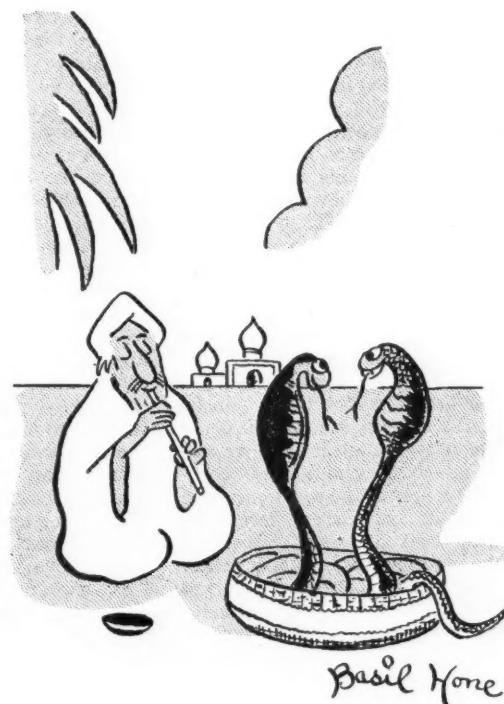
E. O. D. K.

Bad Man Makes Good.

In fiction the eccentric character prospers best in the hands of the amateur or the genius, and this may be because the former cannot be content with the everyday, while the latter observes it acutely. So it is not surprising that the near-brilliant competence of Mr. L. A. G. STRONG has not served him too well in the creation of the hero-villain of his new novel, *Trevannion* (METHUEN, 10/6). This robust gentleman pursues small game that brings him in an income from postal orders and stamps (for fivepence he would divulge the old cure for a red nose—"Go on drinking till it turns blue"). As an insurance agent he helps his larger prey to pay their premiums and, in return, to benefit their benefactor at a fifty per cent. rate when they chance to die during epidemics that attack the badly-drained parts of the town. He continues to be amusing while he sets the place by its ears, and is singularly touching in his last helplessness. Yet he, and the little maid-servant who becomes, vicariously, his absolver, and the old maid who strips her soul before our eyes, and the yokels and the hearties, are altogether too much like people in books, though they may belong to the screen. They, and all the others, have pathos and humour and liveliness, but Mr. STRONG has not given us quite enough. His book is more than just readable, but he has before now made us forget that we were reading.

B. E. B.

In a review, in our issue of October 20th, of *The Incomparable Aphra* it was mistakenly implied that the author, Mr. GEORGE WOODCOCK, was at one time a militant Communist. We now understand that Mr. WOODCOCK has never been a Communist and regret that he should have been thus misleadingly described.



"Darling!—he's playing our tune."

The Form is Obvious.

I TOOK in the situation at a glance from my side of the road. There was my car. A few yards to the right, where a lorry had been standing when I parked my car, was one of those yellow cones inverted on top of a pole, indicating a restricted parking area. And a few yards to the left was a large City policeman, grim and forbidding. "Been here fifty minutes," said the policeman advancing on me. "Restricted area. You know the regulations."

I averted my gaze and murmured something about the lorry obscuring the yellow cone. "The lorry," the policeman said, heaving his chest, "was delivering stuff. You can deliver stuff up to a reasonable time. The yellow cone and all these here markings have been here for months." The circular movement of his hand indicated at least three bright yellow pavement markings in the immediate vicinity. "Couldn't have painted them while you was gone," he said ironically, disabusing me of the sudden thought I had actually entertained. "Mind you," he added humourlessly, "there was enough time for that too."

With the gesture that is the despair of the motorist, the policeman's right hand began slowly to unbutton his left-hand tunic pocket. I automatically produced my papers and noted the flicker of pain on his face as he opened my driving licence and saw that I had remembered to sign it. He then made a brief circuit of the car to inspect my road licence and index number, waved a few morbid passers-by aside, and handed my documents back with a hint of regret that they seemed to be in order. I left him adding a few riders in his notebook and looking, if anything, more grim and forbidding than when I had first seen him.

In the club bar that afternoon I raised the matter with all in earshot and awaited their individual views. Jim the barman said it was nothing: a five bob fine and Bob's your uncle. Upjohn the actor agreed and said the form was to send a letter of abject and ignominious apology and throw yourself on the mercy of the court. Joe, the other barman, said they were both mistaken, that it wasn't just an ordinary parking case, but a yellow peril case. "Chap next door but one to me's brother-in-law," he said discomfitingly, "got done five pun for the same thing." Upjohn said now he came to think of it, didn't someone get three months recently just as an example? "Well, anyway," I said, quickly trying to bring some humour into the

situation, "they have abolished the death penalty." It was a weak joke, so I had to laugh for the others by proxy. And then Parry the insurance man piped up. "You're all wrong," he announced, staring into his pink gin. "The form is not to write letters but send your lawyer along. You've got a lawyer, dammit, haven't you? Well, send him along, man; save you time and money in the end."

When my summons arrived it seemed obvious that sending a letter of apology was out. There was a footnote to the effect that no written communications regarding the case would be considered. I mentioned this to Upjohn when next I saw him, but he pooh-poohed it as officialese. I saw then quite plainly what the form was. The form was to go to court in person, as the summons seemed to require.

I arrived at the court punctually after parking my car and met my policeman on the steps. He nodded brusquely at me and opened the door politely. Inside the small court were many policemen minus helmets, a number of harassed-looking men who were obviously errant motorists, and an equal number of men with wing-collars and brief-cases who were obviously lawyers. I suddenly felt homesick and lonely and wished I had taken Parry's advice about employing a lawyer. I was first case. The clerk read the charge, the policeman enlarged on it and quoted more or less verbatim what I had said to him, another policeman shouted that there was nothing known against me in that court, and the alderman on the bench asked me from behind his spectacles whether I had anything to say. I muttered something incoherently and before I was halfway through the alderman said "Pay ten shillings. Next."

With much relief I split a pound with the policeman who had not known anything against me at that court, and feeling more and more sprightly joined the motley group at the side to hear the next case. It was one similar to mine, but the motorist charged had done an Upjohn on the court and sent a letter of apology, in spite of the footnote on the summons. The apology was most abject and ignominious and I felt a little sick. "Pay two pounds. Next," said the alderman. This, I thought, was great stuff. Wait till I get back to the club bar.

The third case was a typical Parry case. Here a lawyer had come to plead for his client. In a long speech he mentioned his client's quarter of a

century's driving without a blemish, the rarity of the occasions when his client came up to town from the country, the unfamiliarity of his client with the restricted area regulations, the general illegibility of the yellow bands, particularly when obstructed by other parked cars. It was cogent, persuasive, rhetorical. It moved me to extreme compassion and sympathy. This, I thought, was obviously the form, to send your lawyer. And when the lawyer ended with outstretched arms and an impassioned plea to dismiss the case under the Probation of Offenders Act, I felt as though I had literally thrown ten bob down the drain.

The clerk whispered to the alderman and the alderman blinked back at the lawyer. "Pay three pounds," he said. "Next."

A gasp went up in the court and I felt embarrassed when I realized that it was a solitary gasp and that it was mine. But disappointed as I was on behalf of the lawyer and his client, my self-confidence in the way I had defended my own case came back with a rush. I nodded brusquely to my policeman and left the court with swinging stride. The form was obviously to go to court in person, brave the attack and defend yourself with honour, distinction, and a ten bob fine.

When I reached the street I took in the situation at a glance. On the other side of the road was my car. A few yards to the right was a lamp standard where a lorry had been parked. It had a vivid yellow band painted round its waist. A few yards to the left stood a large City policeman, grim and forbidding.

The form is obvious. I must write a letter to the court.

The Lost Army

NOW that the leaves have fallen
In the woods behind the hill
A lost grey ghostly army
At nights is marching still:
With silent footfall winding
Through the woods in the rain—
An army of lost Atlantis
Or vanished Aquitaine,
Or the shades of other summers,
Of locust-eaten years,
Of half-forgotten meetings,
Of long-dead hopes and fears.
The rain drips from the branches
And the little dawn-wind blows,
But on and on in the moonlight
The lost grey army goes.

G. D. R. D.



DAVID
LONDON

Shin-Guards, Large Size

MUMMY! Mummy, are you writing letters or something? Mummy, if you should happen to be writing down a list of what everybody wants for Christmas, could you write down that I want some shin-guards? Shin-guards. To wear inside my socks when I'm playing football. Honestly, Mummy, my legs are all lumps where things hit me, and all the others have enormous shin-guards—yes, very big, huge: no, they can't run in them very well, none of them run very well. Well, could I just have an ordinary-sized pair to wear inside my socks, because honestly, Mummy—feel my bumps!

I've just been playing in the field with Martin and Christopher. Mummy, they *always* make me play goalie. Well, I don't mind playing goalie, but they said that I didn't play well and that they both played forward very well, because they scored thirty-eight goals. Well, I don't think they played very well. I know they're bigger: but what they do is, they keep on kicking the ball to one another and then they come as near as they can and they both say "We made you look, we made you stare, we made the barber cut your hair," and then they whang it in. I don't call that shooting properly, do you?

Well, I don't know where they learnt it, it isn't the sort of poem that's in a

book. Mummy, did you know I have to learn a poem because our class, and Hilary's class, are giving a concert to each other at the end of term, and we've all got to learn something on our own, besides a soppy song all together something about singing singing buttercups and daisies. Mummy, all the poems in our book are soppy, like the wind saying now for a frolic, now for a leap; and the ones in Hilary's book are worse, all about I once had a sweet little doll dears, which is what she's learning; its arm was trodden off by the cows dears.

Mummy, what I'm going to do, I'm going to say one out of Martin and Christopher's book, a much better one about half a league, half a league, half a league. Mummy, what does it mean, half a league, half a league, half a league? I mean, does it mean the same half a league, or three half a leagues so that it's one and a half leagues? Why does it keep on saying the same thing, Mummy, why does it? Mummy, it's a much better poem than the ones in our book, it's all about into the jaws of Death, into the mouth of Hell. Mummy, why did they go on riding when it says they knew someone had blundered? Why? You'd have thought *someone* would have asked what they were riding half a league, half a league, half a league for, wouldn't you? Anyway, it's better

than the wind saying now for a frolic, now for a leap.

Mummy, do you think I could dress up to give my piece? Well, there's that African chief's shield grandfather has, and the lovely spear: do you think he'd lend them to me? Mummy, I'd be very, very careful, honestly. Well, Mummy, it would be much more interesting for everybody, me talking about reeled from the sabre stroke, if they could look at that very long sharp spear to reel from. Oh, well... Anyway, if I were Martin and Christopher and had half a league, half a league, half a league in my book, I'd say that when I was shooting a goal and not a silly rhyme about made the barber cut your hair.

Mummy, this is a blind guess—which do you think I like playing most of everything I play? I mean, Don Bradman, he's the best cricketer, but I suppose he can play football too. Guess. Well, it's batsman and goal-keeper. Mummy, are you writing down a list for Christmas? Because I think it would be a good thing to put down shin-guards to be as big as possible, I mean as long as I can still run. Mummy, would you like to see if I can say it now—half a league, half a league, half a league? Mummy, do you think anybody knows what it really means? Do you?



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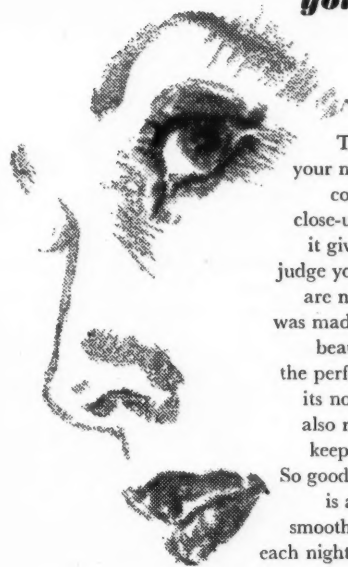
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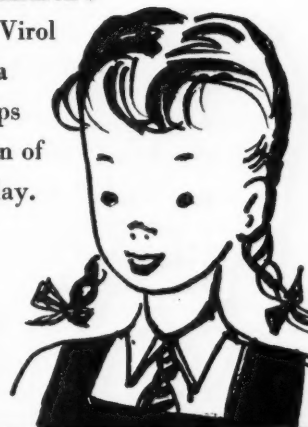
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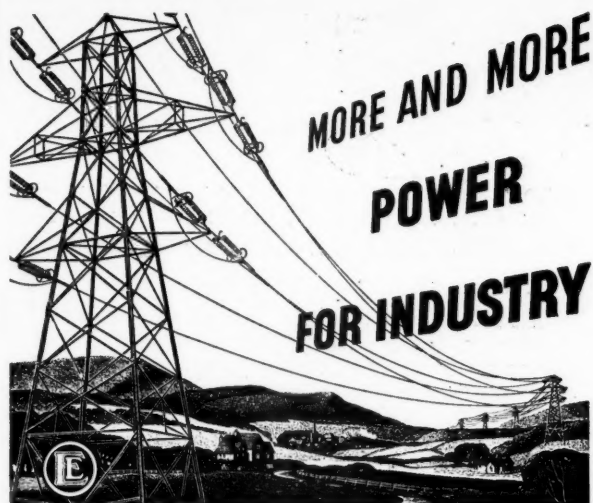
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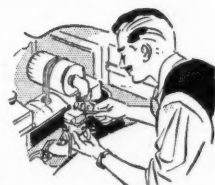
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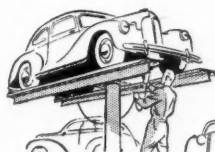
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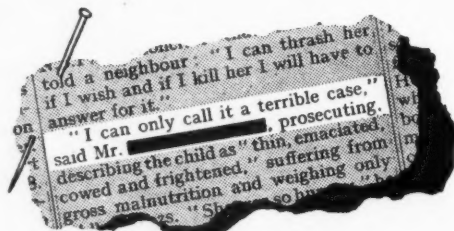
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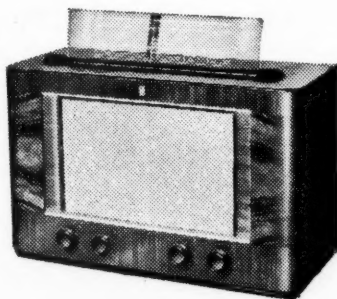
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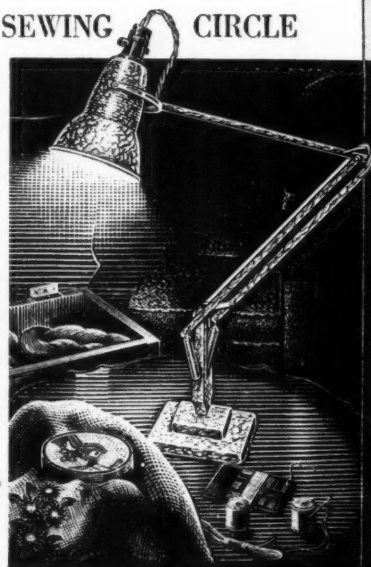
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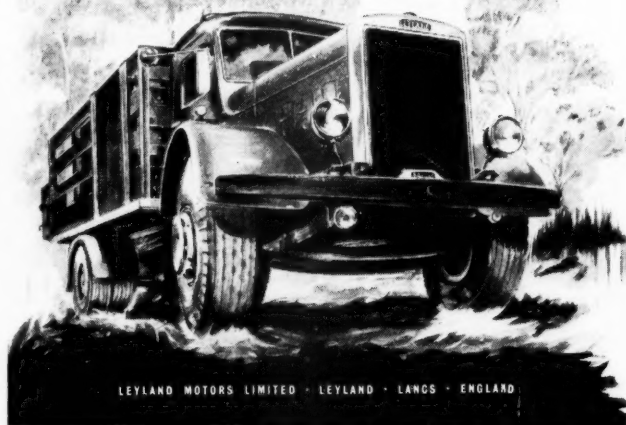
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